NELSON MANDELA, BY JOHN CARLIN

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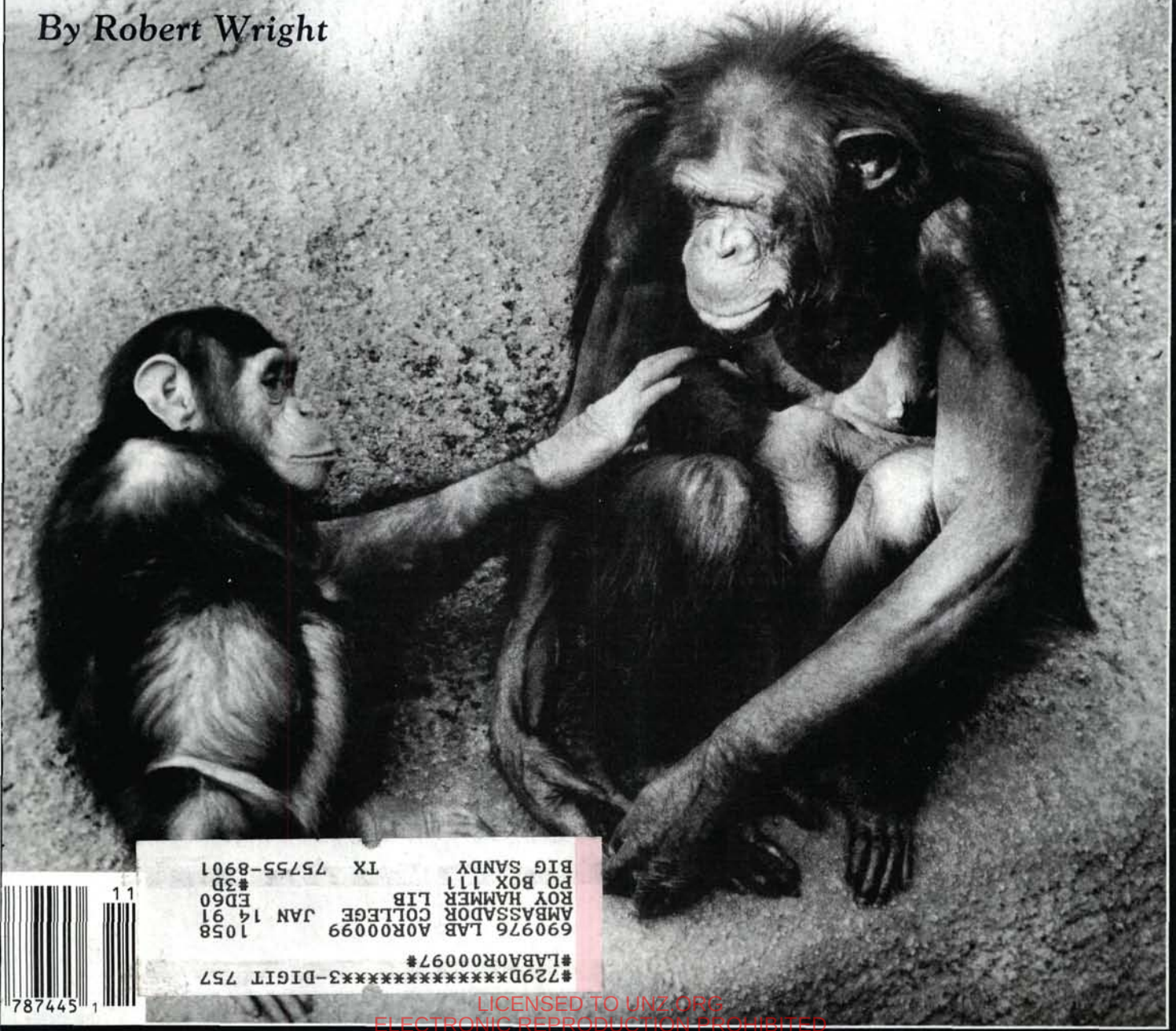
THE NEW REPUBLIC

ıul Berman on Orwell · Drexel Burnham lays an egg · The brains behind Quayle

They have feelings, too.

The surprisingly stubborn logic of 'animal rights'

By Robert Wright



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CORRESPONDENCE

Miles to go

To the editors:

Stanley Crouch indulges in a vicious personal harangue against Miles Davis in what is purportedly a review of *Miles: The Autobiography* and *Miles Davis Chronicle: The Complete Prestige Recordings, 1951-1956* ("Play the Right Thing," February 12). Not even pretending to confine himself to the works under review, Crouch sketchily chronicles Davis's entire career, focusing on features such as the musician's attitude toward women and his notorious and commercially savvy contempt for whites.

Few serious students of jazz think Davis's technical proficiency ranks with that of Armstrong, Gillespie, Parker, or Coltrane. Nevertheless, Davis's contributions to jazz have been just as valuable. His leadership and compositions have inspired some of the most memorable performances by jazz players of two generations. He single-handedly created jazz-rock fusion, a highly accessible form of jazz still alive and well twenty years later. Fusion has also had the retrograde effect of introducing "mainstream" 1950s jazz to new generations of musicians.

Davis has never pretended to be a moral or political leader. He is a musician, first and last. Crouch's cutting words with regard to Davis's allegedly racist and sexist attitudes therefore are largely irrelevant.

ROBERT L. ALDISERT
Ridgeland, Mississippi

To the editors:

Stanley Crouch is disheartened that Miles Davis has "sold out." As evidence Crouch cites Davis's praise for Prince, whom Davis compares to Duke Ellington. Crouch calls Prince a "Minneapolis vulgarian and borderline drag queen." The homophobic remark is typical; Crouch's critical sensibilities are confounded by his dogma on style.

Crouch feels that African-Americans who do not address their oppressors with civility are guilty of self-aggrandizement. Such diverse figures as Eldridge Cleaver, Spike Lee, Eddie Murphy, Richard Pryor, and the rap artists Public Enemy and Ice-T followed Davis's adoption of "the bugaboo blues of the noble savage, the surly and dangerous Negro who will have nothing to do with bourgeois conventions." To them, writes Crouch, "obnoxious, vulgar, and anti-social behavior has been confused with black authenticity." Surely Crouch does not mean to question the "authenticity" of Lee or Cleaver or Ice-T. It is impossible to imagine *Do the Right Thing*, or *Soul on Ice*, or *Colors*, all explicitly "black," without a sense of surliness and danger.

Crouch feels betrayed by Davis's invention of himself as a punk. He sounds like Peter Schaffer's depiction of Salieri, cursing God for lending his voice to a child. If Crouch could overcome his cultural myopia, perhaps he could see that while Davis may have sold out his music, he never sold out himself.

JOSH GOLDFEIN
Princeton, New Jersey

To the editors:

Is it inconceivable that the music of James Brown, Jimi Hendrix, Sly Stone, and others Miles Davis admired, music so powerful but so far removed from bebop, exerted a deeper influence than Stanley Crouch allows? To Crouch, Davis "turned butt to the beautiful" in order to "genuflect before the commercial." By contrast, he says, Davis is triumphant when he "elevates" Hendrix's "The Wind Cries Mary" through use of its rhythmic motifs in "Mademoiselle Mabry," an example of the "alchemical" ability jazz musicians possess to transform "banal popular songs" into something more worthy of our attention. Later, Crouch says, Davis lost control of his popular influences. But was commercialism the only thing he succumbed to? Perhaps Davis did not want to "elevate" anything. Maybe he liked "The Wind Cries Mary" more than the thing he had transformed it into. Perhaps he wanted to make his own kind of rock and funk, rather than simply perform dry manipulations of its formal elements. This, I think, was Davis's mistake, for the genre he helped pioneer, with its incorporation of rock rhythms and instrumentation into an open improvisational format, was, with a few exceptions, a musical failure.

Crouch is perpetuating the myth that pop music was a debased or inferior kind of black music, appealing to the uneducated masses but repugnant to the aesthetically informed. Fusion, in this view, was bad not because the jazz musicians who practiced it made poor excuses for funk, rock, and pop artists (which is in fact the case), but because they allowed music from the gutter to contaminate their art.

DAN POLLAK
Palo Alto, California

The Soviet union

To the editors:

In your comparison of the legitimacy of American and Soviet federalism ("Liberty or Union?" February 5), you assert that "the freely elected legislatures of the original American states ratified the Constitution." That sounds reasonable, but it isn't what happened.

Article VII of the Constitution states that "the Ratification of the Conventions of nine States, shall be sufficient for the Establishment of this Constitution between the States so ratifying the Same." The Founders appear to have anticipated the mischief that could have arisen if the federal government had received its authority directly from the governments of the original states. Instead, they devised a scheme whereby both levels of government could claim that their authority came straight from the people.

JERRY FRANKS
Midland, Texas

To the editors:

"Liberty or Union?" succinctly summarizes that Mikhail Gorbachev either has to let the three Baltic republics leave the Soviet Union or crush their nagging independence movements by force, in which case perestroika will also go down the drain. Before we become overwhelmed with pity for Gorbachev, we should remember that Lenin's promise of full national independence to the Russian Empire's minorities was a key—probably crucial—stratagem in the Bolshevik seizure of state power in 1917. Lenin's iconoclastic agitation helped break up the old multinational empire and emasculate its last defenders under the Provisional Government that followed the czar's fall. Later, during the civil war, it cut the political ground out from underneath the reactionary White Guards, who by necessity were based in outlying borderlands such as Estonia and the region between the Black and Caspian Seas, a hodgepodge of tribes and nationalities.

Of course, as soon as it was safe to do so Lenin set in motion the reconquest of Azerbaijan, Georgia, and other breakaway republics duly recognized by his Soviet government; his choice for nationalities commissar, Stalin, completed the forcible reintegration in 1940. It only seems fair that the border republics should take it into their own hands to enforce the promise of self-determination Lenin treacherously reneged on and give us another round of the mass rallies for independence from Russia last seen in 1917-18.

FREDERICK GABRIELSEN
Livingston, New Jersey

To the editors:

The cover of your February 5 issue provides a flagrant example of the very Rus-

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

MARCH 12, 1990

GRAND PARTNERS

Suddenly and gratifyingly, the cloud of certain doom has been lifted from South Africa. With acts of astounding courage and farsightedness, President F. W. de Klerk has created the possibility of peaceful resolution to what had seemed the world's most intractable national conflict—one that appeared headed toward a years-long torrent of blood. De Klerk has taken only the first steps toward negotiation with representatives of the black majority—and toward power-sharing, democracy, and equitable distribution of South Africa's resources—yet in a way his steps are even more remarkable than those of that other great political pioneer of our time, Mikhail Gorbachev. The Soviet economy had grown so obviously decrepit that there was no choice but to reform. Gorbachev's surprise was to be more radical than anyone expected—radical enough to abolish totalitarian rule, though still, perhaps, not radical enough to save his nation.

De Klerk's National Party was elected by his fellow whites last September on a platform of change, but the president is going beyond anything they expected or thought necessary, and is doing so with stunning speed. It is as though Gorbachev had declared in August 1985, five months in office, that he might free Eastern Europe, allow multiparty democracy, or permit private property. De Klerk has freed Nelson Mandela without preconditions, has unbanned the African National Congress and thirty-three other anti-apartheid groups, and has declared that blacks will have full political rights in a new South Africa. Gorbachev has only lately raised the possibility that Communist Party rule may end. De Klerk already has sounded the death knell of apartheid and white domination.

To be sure, there are major steps that de Klerk has not taken. He has not fully ended the state of emergency that allows the police virtual carte blanche in putting down "disorder." Nor has he introduced legislation ending the essential elements of apartheid—the Group Areas Act, which forbids non-whites from living in white areas; the Population Registration Act, which classifies every South African by race; and the Land Act of 1913, which restricts ownership by race. Nor has he acceded to the concept of one-person, one-vote—that is, black majority rule. But all of this is almost implicit in the steps he has taken so far.

Unlike Gorbachev, who (up to a point) can decree change more or less by himself, de Klerk needs a partner to negotiate with and to assume the power that he seeks to give away. The early evidence suggests that Nelson Mandela, despite twenty-seven years of imprisonment, means to help de Klerk construct a multiracial democracy in which all South Africans can participate and prosper. Mandela engendered concern immediately after his release by affirming the ANC's policies of armed struggle and nationalization of mines and other industries, and by praising the South African Communist Party. Yet he quickly emphasized that he was seeking change in South Africa not through violence but through negotiation. In his speech on arriving in Soweto, he acknowledged "fears of white South Africans" and said blacks must demonstrate goodwill to their "white compatriots, and convince them by our conduct."

Demonstrations of political courage and statements of goodwill give one reason to hope that South Africa can avoid the civil war that seemed its destiny until a few weeks ago. Yet there are tremendous difficulties ahead. Radicals to the right of de Klerk and to the left of Mandela already are furious at the prospect of compromise solutions. The Conservative Party and the neo-Nazi Afrikaner Resistance Movement regard de Klerk as a traitor to his race, and elements of the government security services, the police, and the military share their views. The Pan-Africanist Congress, along with leftists and armed-struggle militants in the ANC, oppose any dilution of black rule, want to dispossess white property

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owners, and seek to establish a one-party state in spite of the disaster that system has visited on other black African nations. The outlook of the PAC is, "one settler, one bullet."

There's every danger that radicals will mount terrorist operations, either to undercut reformers on their own side of the racial divide or to provoke counter-violence on the other side. De Klerk and Mandela both have been threatened with death. It is even conceivable that South Africa could yet come to resemble Lebanon, such are the multiple hatreds existing there. Both the whites and the blacks are split ideologically and ethnically. The blacks also are split by age, class, and education (with the younger, poorer, and less-educated the more militant). Two thousand blacks were killed last year in Natal province in clashes between ANC supporters and followers of Zulu tribal chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi, and twenty died in the past week in fighting between the ANC and the PAC in the township of Uitenhage, near Port Elizabeth. Mandela has promised to reach out a hand to Buthelezi, yet he opened and closed his first speech in Cape Town on February 11 with remarks in Xhosa, the language of his own tribe, and said nothing in Zulu.

For South Africa to achieve reconciliation and stability will require of Mandela statesmanship at least as great as that required of de Klerk. To maintain his and the ANC's role as the leading voice of South African blacks, Mandela will have a honeymoon period of perhaps eighteen months to two years in which to deliver a settlement that satisfies his population's hunger for power, possessions, and justice. At the same time, he will need to temper black demands so that an agreement can be reached. Life under apartheid has not educated the black population to be temperate.

Mandela also has to ensure that the ultimate arrangements allow South Africa to grow economically. The nation needs a growth rate of six percent per year in order to make a dent in black unemployment, which currently is thirty percent. The country also needs to grow in order to continue pulling along the other countries of Southern Africa, and to finance improvements in health, housing, and education for blacks, which are woefully deficient. The ANC Freedom Charter calls for nationalization of the country's mines and banks, and Mandela repeated that call in his early statements. Trade unions are demanding it, and more radical groups are likely to call for confiscation of other white properties.

The pressure for government control of the economy will be all the greater because, under apartheid, the economy is already highly regulated, with sixty percent of Afrikaners working in government jobs and fifty-five percent of industry owned by the state. De Klerk has begun to sell off state enterprises, but to attract foreign investment and keep domestic capital from flowing abroad, assurances have to be forthcoming that the black majority will respect private property and the work ethic.

During the decades that Mandela spent in prison, the so-called African socialist model of national development has been utterly discredited. All over the continent, it has led to poverty, corruption, and misery. The former Communist countries of Eastern Europe are looking toward democratic capitalism and social democracy, as practiced in Western Europe, as their models. Also available, though, is the East Asian model of "authoritarian capitalism," which has brought rapid growth to such countries as South Korea, Taiwan, and Singapore by mixing private ownership with heavy doses of government direction. Before he decides upon an economic option for South Africa, Mandela would be well advised to talk to practitioners of the various models available to him. The United States might help arrange trips to South Africa by Hungarian, Polish, and East Asian experts.

For several years U.S. information programs in South Africa have concentrated on human rights education, and our $35 million AID program has gone chiefly to scholarships for black youths outside South Africa. As conditions change, so should these programs. Information programs should emphasize the advantages of democracy and market economics, and AID money should be increased and focused on training black business-people. Most South African universities now are racially integrated, so the ban on in-country scholarships can be lifted. Some State Department officials would like to send the Peace Corps to aid South African blacks. That's a good idea too.

It's also time for the United States to think about using the lifting of economic sanctions as a reward for reform and an incentive for greater reform. As Ronald Reagan's vice president and as a presidential candidate, George Bush opposed sanctions. But even administration officials now acknowledge that the economic sanctions imposed by Congress in 1986 helped move the white government toward reform—not so much because of their direct economic bite as because of the political shock they gave to the whites and because of the indirect effect of causing foreign investment to dry up.

Bush correctly declared that all of Congress's conditions for lifting sanctions will not have been met as long as the state of emergency is in effect and hundreds of political prisoners are still in jail. Even when these conditions are met, there will be some in Congress who will want to maintain the sanctions as a way of showing solidarity with the ANC. The ANC probably will want sanctions to stay in effect until all their political demands are met. Some White House aides may even want to keep the sanctions on because it's an election year. But de Klerk needs help in convincing rightists in his own party and the Conservative Party that his policies have some payoff. The United States doesn't have to lift all sanctions, but it should at least open the way for South Africa to receive International Monetary Fund credits to help stimulate its economy.

The United States has only a limited role to play in helping the government and the blacks come to terms

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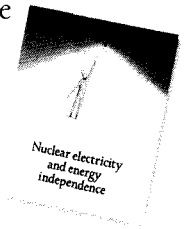

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on constitutional arrangements for majority rule with safeguards for whites and other minorities (such as Indians, who will want assurances that they will not be discriminated against as they have been in Kenya). Through the National Endowment for Democracy, though, the United States could help finance various research programs developing alternative plans such as a Swiss-style federation of states, a U.S.-style bicameral legislative system, and/or a Bill of Rights backed by an independent judiciary. The United States also has the right to praise those who seem to be working for democratic reform and to criticize those who are not.

At the moment, both F.W. de Klerk and Nelson Mandela deserve unreserved praise. If de Klerk is not getting his share, perhaps that is because he does not cut Mandela's heroic figure, or because Gorbachev has gotten the world used to dramatic political moves, or because few outsiders are yet ready to lionize any Afrikaner. But the changes taking place in South Africa are epic. It is not at all certain that they will turn out well. Indeed, the odds probably still are that they will not—that a center cannot be built and held after so many years of injustice, that extremists will provoke civil war, or that the future will replicate the wretched polities of Tanzania and Mozambique. But at last there is hope for South Africa, and it rides on the partnership of de Klerk and Mandela.

TOGETHER AGAIN

For the Germans since 1945, the idea of reunification has been successively an expectation, an increasingly wan hope, an empty slogan, and a hope again. With the fall of the Wall reunification became inevitable, and in recent weeks inevitability has given way to imminence. Among Germany's European neighbors—and among some Americans, too—all this has prompted a flowering of phobias. It's an understandable response, and a profoundly wrong one. The reunification of Germany should be welcomed, and welcomed without fear.

It should be welcomed, first of all, as a concomitant of the galloping collapse of the Communist system. The German Democratic Republic was none of the above—not democratic, not a republic, and in important respects not even German. That is, it was not a nation-state as Europeans understand the term, but an imperial imposition of the Soviet Union. Once Mikhail Gorbachev renounced the threat of Soviet military intervention and real countries such as Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia began seizing their own history, there was no way for a bald improvisation like the GDR to survive. Most of its 17 million inhabitants felt no loyalty to it. They were exiles in their own territory, severed from their brothers and sisters in the real Germany to the west. They felt so alien that hundreds of thousands left. They are leaving still, at the rate of nearly 3,000 a day; something like five percent of East Germany moved west last year alone. This mass desertion was always the most telling reproach to the idea of the workers' state.

The two Germanys will soon be one, the east absorbed into the west. There will be no delicate merging of traditions or conventions but the acceptance by one of the other's ways, a triumph of liberal society over totalitarianism, of capitalism over socialism, of social democracy over "people's democracy." It's too bad that the Germans of the east, with their Prussian past, will not have had the opportunity to wage a constitutional debate among themselves and to choose democratic norms explicitly. Still, the decision by the massed populace of the GDR to take up the political and economic life of the Federal Republic is the moral equivalent of that choice.

We understand why the Soviets are discomforted by the disintegration of their German satrapy. The creation of the East German state was their most ambitious effort to alter the primordial realities of ethnic solidarity. The fact that so many people educated under Communist rule persisted in affirming the German loyalties to which they were born said simply and decisively that this could not be done—and certainly that it could not be done by communism. Moreover, the way in which the East German polity gradually dissolved belied the legend that the GDR had ever been a social or economic showcase. The peaceful revolution of 1989 is the last act of a drama begun by workers in the rising in the streets of East Berlin in 1953. At that time, Bertolt Brecht offered the Stalinist regime his ironic counsel to "dissolve the people and elect another." Now, of course, the people have dissolved the regime—and, in the process, are putting a halt to Moscow's four-decade-long armed blackmail at the heart of Europe.

The Soviets' resistance to the inevitable has grown increasingly feeble, the messages from Moscow increasingly mixed. "No one doubts the right of Germans to self-determination," the Soviet foreign minister, Eduard A. Shevardnadze, offers reassuringly in one breath, adding chillingly in the next that Moscow has "not yet said its last word." Unable to halt the process of unification, the Soviets have grudgingly acquiesced to the general principle while setting forth peremptory, and ever diminishing, conditions. First it was neutrality, by which was meant neutrality under Soviet influence. Now that it's clear that that option is, in Shevardnadze's delicate phrase, "not very realistic," the Soviet authorities seem rapidly to be concluding that a united Germany constrained by membership in NATO (and in as many other supranational bodies as possible) offers them more security than a truly neutral—i.e., unanchored—German superstate. Russian apprehensions about Germany have a genuine historical basis, of course; but the Soviet inflation of an imagined German threat is little more than a way to salvage some shadow of the Warsaw Pact, some remnant of the cohesion that comes from fear. It is a false fear, one we should do nothing to validate or support.

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It's not merely the Soviets who would like to impede German reunification. There are also Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher (honoring an old tradition of British-German rivalry) and the wall-to-wall carpet of French politicians so faithful to the old cold war that they seem unable to entertain even the possibility of democratic victory and Communist defeat. The discussion in Europe is filled with largely mindless evocations of 1870, 1914, and 1939. But the Germans have reflected amply on their history. In West Germany the schools have taught well the baleful lessons of militarism—so well that the country's establishment politics now includes neutralist and pacifist currents, exasperating at times but probably not dangerous. The moral authority of democratic ways in West Germany is higher than in many historically more favorable environments. The Germans have earned the right to be freed from the division imposed on them by the big powers after World War II.

They are also entitled, as a free people, to decide with whom they are to be allied and whose troops—if anybody's—are to be stationed on their soil. They will doubtless want Western troops for the foreseeable future, not only as a hedge against uncertainties about Soviet behavior but also as reassurance to their neighbors of their own peaceful intentions. A U.S. presence would reassure the nervous Poles. But their nervousness and that of others in Central Europe is not warranted by anything in the German present. German territorial designs in Europe seem to be a thing of the past.

The economic role the Germans are to play in the commercial activities of other countries is also properly a matter only between them and those countries. It should not be decided by third countries who fear German skill and energy in the marketplace. Until yesterday the French imagined a European community in which France would be the dominant market force. They assumed that in a European market, oriented westward, the Federal Republic would be willing to follow France's lead and bow to its discipline. This was always something of a fantasy. But the specter of German unification has forced Paris to face the facts of German industriousness and ingenuity. Resisting unification won't alter those facts.

However, Germany will now increasingly address its attentions eastward, to the formerly developed economies shattered by communism, and the Europe of 1992 will be far different from what was imagined. For what was imagined assumed a static geopolitical background. Happily, this is not a time of stasis in Europe. The strength of the German economy is a tribute to Western ways. And it is needed by the sinking economies of its neighbors as a provider of industrial know-how and financial aid, loans, and investments. No other country is willing or able to perform that job. And let it not be forgotten that what the Germans seem willing to do economically in East Germany is fraught with risk, particularly the plan for a single German currency in advance of unification. Their own economy will suffer, at least in the short run. Their budget deficits will go up, there will be pressure on the bond markets, an inflationary spiral is already under way, the unemployment figures will escalate. To invite these unpleasant repercussions is politically and socially responsible, and hardly deserving of the abuse that other Europeans have dished out.

Predictably, those who want to preserve the illusion of a resilient German peril, for whatever reasons, have tried to whip up a hysteria among Jews. Mrs. Thatcher addressed some of her gloomiest comments on the Germans to a meeting of the Board of Deputies of British Jews. Elsewhere, Teutonophobes have tried to mobilize the understandable foreboding of Jews about German power into a political force against it. Here and there, these efforts have met with some success. But again, the fears from history do not do justice to the present. Indeed, if there is to be anxiety about an anti-Semitism in Europe that endangers its remaining Jews, that anxiety should focus eastward. In the Soviet Union, anti-Semitism has been an ugly and popular asset of right and left for generations. Poland gave us the strange phenomenon of an anti-Semitism altogether without Jews, one that found hospitality in the Church and in the Party alike. Anti-Semitism is, if anything, now more virulent in the countries of the Warsaw Pact than it is in Germany. This is not to say there is no hatred of Jews among the Germans. But the Germans have demonstrated concretely their contrition about the past. They have also been alert to Jewish interests in the present, most especially to the overriding Jewish interest in a safe Israel. The reunification of Germany would actually enhance the enterprise of German self-criticism and German moral obligation. After decades of evasion it was the prospect of reunification that finally obliged the East German government to acknowledge the culpability of the whole German society in the catastrophe of the Jews.

There need be no excuses for ending the artifice of the two Germanys. Only the political and military strategies of the Soviet Union justified this division of one people in the first place. Those strategies are now everywhere in collapse, acknowledged for what they were, cruel instruments of totalitarian repression and a doctrinaire imperialism. The withering away of the East German state and the reunion of its subjects with the west and with the idea of Europe itself will mean the end of a macabre social experiment in the domination of human beings. That is a happy event.

NOTEBOOK

WE LIKE IKE: We weren't that crazy about Senate Republican leader Bob Dole's plan to reshuffle the foreign aid budget, but we like his proposal to change the name of Dulles International Airport to Eisenhower International Airport. For one thing, the three-letter designation, now the hard-to-remember IAD, would pre-

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sumably be the ultra-mnemonic IKE, as in "I'm taking TWA to LAX via JFK from IKE." For another, the naming of such a gigantic facility for a hardworking but unimaginative Cabinet official has always seemed to us wildly disproportionate, and seems even more so now that Washington has plenty of subway stations ideally suited to the purpose. For a third, Dwight D. Eisenhower—father of the Federal Aviation Administration, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and the federal highway network—has looked better and better with the passage of time, while John Foster Dulles has not. It may be objected that the proposal, which Dole has since backed away from, would create too many Eisenhower memorials, since we already have an Eisenhower Theater. The solution is obvious. At the Kennedy Center, the Reagan Theater.

FOREIGN CORRUPT PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT: No need to let American laws prohibiting corporate bribery overseas stand in the way of a good time. In its "Asia in the 1990s" special issue, *Fortune* offers a map to help businesspeople navigate the treacherous shoals of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act. According to the article, titled "When Somebody Wants a Payoff," there are loopholes aplenty. For example, it's not actually illegal to pay foreign officials to "facilitate" routine government action, which can mean "everything from processing visas and licenses to providing water, electricity, phone service, police protection, and mail delivery." And of course you can employ middlemen to observe the "local customs," which they are familiar with and you aren't. So long as you don't know they are actually paying bribes, it's fine. But whatever you do, *Fortune* notes, "Don't forget to consult *your* sense of right and wrong." Whatever that might involve. Nudge nudge, wink wink. •

Meet Dan Quayle's brain.

THE VEEP'S KEEPER

By Jacob Weisberg

Last December the vice president traveled to New York to deliver a speech at Yeshiva University. He began with references to Albert Einstein and the Talmud, analyzed an excerpt from George Washington's 1790 letter to the Hebrew Congregation of Newport, and announced a crusade to repeal the United Nation's "Zionism is racism" resolution before closing with an anecdote about meeting Elie Wiesel. Asked how he would like to be remembered by Jewish history, Quayle told Wiesel, "I would like to be remembered as a Christian who helped make Israel more secure, and who helped make the world a little more tolerant."

The speech went over brilliantly. No one belabored the point that the Talmud isn't Quayle's, or any other politician's, bedside reading. The vice president got a prolonged standing ovation, and solidified his favor with Jewish groups. In a *New York Times* column that is the single most favorable piece of publicity Quayle has received since taking office, A. M. Rosenthal wrote that Quayle had "honored his country, himself, the supportive Bush-Baker diplomacy—and given the nations a chance to undo a great wrong."

For one still struggling to overcome Jay Leno's jokes on "The Tonight Show," the speech was a minor coup. Those familiar with the workings of Quayle's office immediately credited Bill Kristol, his bright, young chief of staff. Though Quayle has long been unswervingly pro-Israel, the speech had Kristol's fingerprints all over it. Speaking at Yeshiva on Human Rights Day, focusing on "Zionism is racism," arguing that anti-Zionism is a cloak for anti-Semitism, and quoting Jeane Kirkpatrick on the U.N.'s loss of moral authority are all hallmarks of the neoconservative milieu in which Kristol is steeped. Though the intellectual sophistication and political savvy he has brought to the vice president's office have yet to make Quayle a credible Talmudist, Kristol shows signs of progress in the difficult task of winning him the respect of his peers and the public.

Son of the writer Irving Kristol and the historian Gertrude Himmelfarb, Kristol began bridging the worlds of politics and academe early in his career. When he was still a Harvard undergraduate with libertarian leanings, he interned in the White House office of Daniel Patrick Moynihan, a colleague of his father's from *The Public Interest*, who was then advising Nixon on urban policy. Remaining at Harvard for a Ph.D., he wrote an impressive dissertation on the role of the courts in the American Constitution under the guidance of Harvey Mansfield, who initiated him into the mysteries of Leo Strauss, the conservative political theorist whose disciples also include Carnes Lord, Quayle's foreign policy adviser. (Kristol considers himself a Straussian as well as a neoconservative.) After several years teaching political philosophy, in 1985 Kristol accepted an offer to serve as special assistant to Secretary of Education William Bennett, whose appointment Kristol's parents had lobbied for.

In less than five months, Kristol became Bennett's chief of staff. At Education, his conservatism acquired a New Right patina: he became a strenuous opponent of abortion, school-based birth control clinics, and AIDS education promoting the use of condoms. He forged links with supporters of family values, such as Education Undersecretary Gary Bauer, who later became Reagan's chief domestic policy adviser, and directed the drafting of the secretary's crusading speeches in favor of school prayer and against value-

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neutral education. At the time he told *The Washington Post* he saw the point of the office as "not to hum quietly," but "to change the world out there." Despite his ideological zeal, however, Kristol acted as a restraining influence on Bennett's tendency to rage unproductively at his opponents, and was widely credited with increasing his boss's effectiveness.

Kristol left Education in 1988 to manage the campaign of his college roommate and fellow Straussian Alan Keyes, who ran against Maryland Senator Paul Sarbanes. Keyes got creamed, but after the election Kristol appeared, at age thirty-six, as one of the most eligible conservative political hands in Washington. Bennett, who had not yet been appointed drug czar, wanted Kristol wherever he ended up. Jack Kemp offered him a job at HUD. White House chief of staff John Sununu proffered the directorship of the Economic Policy Council. And Quayle, on the recommendation of Ken Adelman, former head of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, pushed Kristol to become his chief domestic policy adviser.

Kristol took the Quayle job against the advice of friends who were unimpressed with the vice president and thought the perch an unlikely one from which to influence administration policy. Kristol saw an opportunity to promote conservative ideas in working for someone who he was convinced wanted to be an "activist" vice president. He began working on speeches but was soon picking up odds and ends that were falling through the cracks, revealing himself to be more capable than chief of staff Robert Guttman. Once again, Kristol was promoted to run the office within a few months. It is a mark of his career to date that he has advanced speedily without creating ill will. Even Guttman, whom some say Kristol steamrollered, has only praise for him. "It was not my kind of job," Guttman insists.

Since becoming chief of staff in May, Kristol admits to becoming more of a practical politician. "I'm still an activist by temperament and by conviction," he says. "But I may be a little more patient, as anyone would be who had been in this town five years and gotten a little bit older." Unlike many academics who make the transition to government, Kristol has become as adept at negotiation and strategy as he is at issues and specifics. Budget director Richard Darman likens him in this respect to Henry Kissinger and Moynihan, two other academics who have flourished in politics. Even before he became chief of staff, Kristol was invited to attend the daily 7:30 a.m. White House senior staff meeting in Guttman's place. At the morning meeting, Darman says he "is treated with a great deal of respect by the other people at the table." Kristol is creative, thoughtful, and likable, Darman says, and "has a good sense of the importance of ideas and especially original ideas in the advancement of his principles."

Sununu likes Kristol as much as Darman does and considers him a conservative ally at a table of wets. "He's not just there because of his position," says the chief of staff, who makes a point of calling on Kristol at the morning meeting, and calling him back into his office for advice throughout the day, and often late into the evening. Through his closeness to Sununu, Kristol has become influential on a range of domestic policy issues, including the White House's legislative strategy on the minimum-wage hike and its proposed tax-credit alternative to the ABC Child Care bill now before Congress. The vice president's chief of staff ordinarily wouldn't be involved in issues like these.

Kristol's basic strategy is to carve out a number of niches for Quayle to occupy. He wants the vice president to handle a few selected issues quietly and well, without taking unnecessary risks. And so far that's exactly what Quayle has tried to do. As head of the Space Council, he has played a key role in winning the president's backing for a manned mission to Mars, and for the space program in general. Kristol's good relations with Darman are probably responsible, at least in part, for NASA's twenty-four percent increase in Bush's proposed 1991 budget. "Quayle has done a surprisingly good job," says Bruce Murray, a liberal scientist who recently attended a dinner at the vice president's home to talk about space policy. "He's gone from a flat-footed non-start to figuring out what to do in a few months."

As head of the U.S. Competitiveness Council, Quayle gets similarly good reviews for his recent efforts on behalf of a product liability reform bill sponsored by Senator Robert Kasten of Wisconsin. Business leaders were pleased that Quayle (or Kristol) got the issue mentioned in the president's State of the Union address. "There is now a sense that Quayle is a force to be reckoned with within the administration," says Bauer, now head of a conservative group called the Family Research Council. "Eventually that will trickle down." Or as Kristol puts it: "As more people meet him in these kinds of contexts they see someone who is very unlike some of the caricatures."

An important test for Quayle was the attempted coup in the Philippines, which took place in December when Bush was 30,000 feet in the air on his way to the Malta summit. Quayle had to run the meeting in the White House situation room. The vice president effected a rapid consensus among national security adviser Brent Scowcroft, Joint Chiefs Chairman Colin Powell, Assistant Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger, and CIA Deputy Director Robert Gates about how to respond to President Aquino's request for military assistance. He didn't do anything more than was required, but according to an official, Quayle's competent management of the crisis until 5 a.m. won the respect of those at the meeting who previously had doubts about him.

Kristol thinks that word of Quayle's competence is bound to spread once it has solidified within the White House. "The key thing in the first year was to establish himself as an important player within the administration and on the Hill," says Kristol. "The second-level audience it was important to pay a lot of attention to was the Republican Party. The third circle is the public.

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If you had people in the West Wing today who were saying Dan Quayle's not a player, he's not involved, he's not influential, all the greatest p.r. in the world wouldn't work because it would be totally undercut."

It's a nice theory, but can Quayle really do anything about his pathetic twenty-nine percent public approval rating? "The fact that we have not made huge progress on the public image front yet is neither a surprise nor particularly disturbing," Kristol says. He thinks the vice president's image will gain this year, as Quayle improves his television skills with coaching from Roger Ailes and travels around the country to campaign for Republican candidates. But there are limits to what even a Roger Ailes can do for Dan Quayle. Appearing on "This Week with David Brinkley" from Panama after the invasion, Quayle looked as glazed as ever and barely made sense. "I'm convinced that the president's correct and courageous decision to do what he had to do in Panama will not be of long-term consequences in a negative sense," was the best defense of the operation he could muster. Kristol is honest with Quayle about his problems with television—he told him that he should have practiced more before going on the Brinkley show—but it's an open question whether Quayle can convince the public to take him more seriously without taking some dramatic step.

For this reason, some prominent Republicans believe Kristol should steer the veep on a more aggressive course. They want Quayle to dispel his bimbo image by choosing a target and showing some teeth, Spiro Agnew-style. "He was burned so badly in the campaign that he's programmed for caution," says one conservative consultant. "He's decided if he doesn't screw up he'll be on the ticket in '92. Kristol's job is to get him to take some chances." Ultimately, this source argues, Kristol himself will be judged by whether he comes up with a few winning plays that transform Quayle's reputation, rather than by how many calls he returns. Bauer too thinks "an old-fashioned donnybrook in which you hold your ground and look serious" might be just the ticket for the vice president. Kristol, however, disagrees. Along with Darman and Sununu, he thinks that Quayle stands to do his image more harm than good if he takes a hazardous dive and belly-flops.

For Quayle, the situation may be no-win. But for Kristol, it's almost no-lose. When the veep gaffes or stumbles, most people take it as confirmation of what they already think: he's dumb. By the same token, when Quayle does something well, they assume that somebody else must be responsible. The insiders Quayle wishes to cultivate look behind the scenes, where they discover Bill Kristol, the clever aide to whom they can award credit. Capable, well-liked, and helpful to the press, Kristol fits the billing of Quayle's master-minder perfectly. Darman and Secretary of State James Baker benefited from a similar dynamic under Reagan. Unwilling to believe that the president was possessed of any intelligence or acuity, reporters portrayed his advisers as the invisible hands working the puppet strings.

Moreover, Kristol knows how to distance himself from the vice president if the situation becomes truly hopeless. He has made clear to friends that he is not wedded to Quayle's ambitions. Come 1996, Kristol might be found working for candidate Kemp or candidate Bennett against candidate Quayle. But if Quayle by some weird fluke does become president and Kristol stays on as his top deputy, the joke will surely be told, as it was of Sherman Adams, chief of staff in Eisenhower's day: God forbid that Bill Kristol should someday die and Dan Quayle become our president. •

A preview of coming attractions.

BURN, DREXEL, BURN

By James J. Cramer

It's tempting and savory to blame Drexel Burnham's overnight collapse on the greed of the firm's managing directors. After all, even as they were reassuring their employees that all was well on the eve of their bankruptcy filing, some senior managers were hastily pulling out their cash from their Drexel personal accounts—money that could not be touched once the filing occurred. Shocked employees who didn't get their money out now rank as lowly creditors, while these prescient directors have plenty of spare cash to tide them over. Further, as news of the filing leaked out, top officers of the firm warned troops to stay calm, because attempts were being made to sell parts of Drexel as whole units. Meanwhile the brass were secretly cutting side deals with brokerage houses for themselves and a few chosen minions, leaving bewildered employees to fend for themselves only *after* these executives had locked up whatever positions were still available. In other words, just as Drexel had astonished Wall Street with its greedy billions during its spectacular rise, it flabbergasted observers with its petty avarice in its final hours.

But simple cupidity can't account for the astounding turnabout that rendered a multibillion-dollar institution with 10,000 employees a worthless hulk in just two short years' time. First of all, if greed alone could destroy a firm, then we can't hold out much hope for Salomon Brothers or Shearson Lehman. The astounding lust for green depicted by Salomon execs in Michael Lewis's *Liar's Poker* and by Shearson officials in Brian Burrough and John Helyar's *Barbarians at the Gate* certainly rivals any of Drexel's shenanigans.

Second, the greediest corps of Drexel's army, junk general Mike Milken and his Beverly Hills contingent, had departed long before Drexel's crunch came. New York management had already paid the price of Mil-

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ken's deeds, both in a $600 million fine to the federal government and in millions of dollars of penalties in forty-odd states.

Finally, though management can be faulted for the premature sale of Drexel's retail division—arguably the only asset a foreign savior might have thirsted for—its canny ability to rally after the loss of Milken's talents showed that Drexel's form of greediness helped it to survive at least temporarily when many firms would have folded. In fact, despite popular misconceptions in the press, Drexel was performing quite nicely without Milken. It certainly wasn't the money machine that Milken created, but it was much leaner and cost-conscious than most Wall Street firms.

The real culprit behind Drexel's vanishing act is far more worrisome than any management defect: it's the slowing of the American economy, and its effect on the leveraged firms that were Drexel's mainstay client base. And though markets around the world greeted Drexel's passing with a rally—as if to say, We are all better off without these capital market miscreants—the problems Drexel faced should soon surface at many of its brokerage and banking competitors.

To trace the real reason for Drexel's collapse we've got to go back to October 13, 1989, when the takeover of United Airlines broke down. Drexel wasn't involved in the fund-raising for that venture, but knowledgeable managers at the firm must have known from that day on that their era was over. Drexel had pioneered the junk financing of takeovers, and it had made most of its money leveraging up companies for themselves and a host of raiders. But here was a deal that made sense financially to many smart investors but failed because the funds could not be raised.

UAL didn't work because the Japanese balked at financing the leveraging of an airline at a time when the U.S. economy was slowing. Throughout the merger boom of the 1980s the Japanese had been the real source of the takeover liquidity. Sure, American brokers and banks always led the syndicates behind these deals, but ultimately all of the real money was raised in Japan. Initially, Drexel had relied on a network of sleazy savings and loans for its funds, but as these institutions bit the dust Drexel became almost totally dependent on Japanese capital to make its machine work. The UAL fiasco signaled the end of massive Japanese financing of leverage transactions. It also signaled that the Japanese would not be interested in bailing out an American brokerage house, particularly one as leveraged as Drexel.

Things got worse when Robert Campeau—again, not a Drexel client—folded his tent. Campeau's collapse caused high-yield mutual fund owners to withdraw from the market, forcing managers of these funds to sell junk at any price to meet the liquidations. Suddenly Drexel's other source of magic, the junk bond, became an investing pariah, something that no prudent money manager could touch. The effect on Drexel of these two events was to eliminate its principal source of fee-based business and to create a colossal liability from its everyday in-house junk bond inventory.

To understand the financing behind a brokerage house, you need only understand the workings of a typical customer's margin account. Like a leveraged individual, Drexel would buy stocks and bonds using credit. (As a maker of markets, Drexel would purchase goods far exceeding its capital, with the expectation that these goods could be sold fast, and at a small profit.) It then would borrow against this purchased merchandise to buy more stocks and bonds. If the value of this margined property happened to go down in value, of course, the customer—because of federal requirements that discourage excess speculation by heavily leveraged institutions—would then have to put up more cash.

As long as Drexel was able to finance deals, it had a pretty predictable cash flow with which to finance its inventory. And as long as deals were being done, and the economy stayed healthy, its inventory of stocks and bonds performed well. But with the trashing of UAL and the demise of Campeau's Allied-Federated empire, suddenly Drexel had lost its cash stream and saw the value of its junk portfolio crash. Each week since the Campeau bankruptcy filing, Drexel's multibillion-dollar inventory of margined goods was reduced in value. Each week Drexel had to put up more and more cash to meet margin calls.

This vicious circle finally led to the ultimate margin call, when Drexel needed quick cash to meet its overnight inventory borrowing needs—or go bust. Banks were unwilling, unless pressured by Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady or Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan, to lend additional capital simply for Drexel to meet its margin call. Only then did Drexel's bad-boy image come into play. Brady and Greenspan, knowing that Drexel had no political clout and no economic champions, declined to force the banks to put up cash. It was Drexel's luck to fall on hard times when the Treasury post was occupied by someone who worked on Wall Street during Drexel's heyday and knew how hated these guys were.

The rest of us can't be cheered by this scenario, because (with the exception of the scorn with which Washington greeted Drexel's problems) this same set of circumstances probably will occur at Merrill Lynch, Shearson Lehman, Salomon, and First Boston. All have big junk bond inventories that are fantastically underwater, all have seen their income stream from takeovers dry up, and all are staring at a slowdown in the economy that will crush their leverage clients.

Of course Drexel's client base, both in trading and investment banking, was the first to feel the weakness, having been the most debt-laden. But deals done by these other "major bracket" firms in the last two years have stacked up corporate debt throughout the U.S. economy. None of these firms is immune from the very same margin call that brought down Drexel.

Drexel's departure was a surprise only in its speed.

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Up until 9:55 a.m. on Tuesday, February 13, Drexel was still taking orders, with most of the firm's 5,000 employees (and Wall Street generally) sensing that death was perhaps a few months or weeks away. But problems at these other firms? If the Drexel scenario is relived away from this so-called isolated incident, the tremors will be felt throughout the rest of the decade.

JAMES J. CRAMER is president of Cramer & Co., a New York investment management firm.

Imagining the South African future.

MANDELA UNBOUND

By John Carlin

JOHANNESBURG

During Nelson Mandela's ride from prison to Cape Town on the afternoon of his release, he spotted a white couple and their children on the side of the road and, to the dismay of his security men, asked his driver to stop. The man had been trying to take a photograph of the twelve-car convoy as it passed. Mandela stepped out of his car alone and walked over to the couple. He talked to them for about ten minutes and played with the little boy and girl. There was much laughter, not to say stupefaction on the part of the couple. Before leaving, Mandela posed with the family and asked one of his party to take the picture.

The next day, when Mandela was asked at his first press conference what differences he found in South Africa after twenty-seven years in prison, he confessed that he didn't know where to begin. But there was one thing in particular that had astonished and gratified him. Driving through the countryside to Cape Town after leaving prison, "along the route I was surprised to see the number of whites who seemed to identify themselves with what is happening in the country today amongst blacks. I was absolutely surprised."

Mandela's generosity toward white people, his urge for reconciliation, and his implicit forgiveness all make nonsense of the reasons previously cited for not releasing him. Senior South African police officers had argued against his release on the grounds of what they called "the Ayatollah factor." They feared that Mandela would mobilize South Africa's black population in the same electric, devastating manner that Khomeini did the Iranian people on his return from exile.

The biggest failing of the black liberation movement has been its inability to mobilize the masses in anything like sufficient numbers to pose a real threat to the white establishment. The police, by sowing fear and by skillfully engineering divisions, have communicated a strong sense to most black people of the futility of attempting to stand up to the white *baas*. Mandela, though, had the potential to galvanize all those who harbor resentment and injustice in their hearts but have not found a channel for political expression. Such was the power of the Mandela myth that the silent, politically inchoate masses would find in him, it was felt, a voice, a drive, and a direction. Indeed, that has been in large measure the political significance of Mandela's release.

The policemen need not fear an uprising. Mandela has kept an astute eye on South African politics over the years, and one thing that can be said for certain is that he is not one to deceive himself. He has noted the imbalance of power between black and white and the state of cowed ignorance to which his people have been reduced during the decades of apartheid rule. Black South Africans are not Iranian fundamentalists. They are a religious people, but not to the fervent extent where religion spills over into revolutionary politics.

Neither is South Africa Eastern Europe. The Berlin Wall of white minority rule will not fall in one night of euphoria. The example of Eastern Europe has prompted the world to expect change, where change is obviously needed, to happen dramatically, and fast. But to begin with, the repression here has not been on the same scale. Where many other governments would have murdered their political enemies, here they detained them without trial. Nelson Mandela is still alive. The police death squads have allegedly assassinated up to 100 people in the last decade, compared with the many thousands, say, all over Latin America. And for all the press restrictions, the freedom to report the news has remained—again compared with the truly repressive countries—surprisingly wide.

Just as important is the fact that the entire population could not be expected to rise up against the government. There are five-and-a-half million whites in South Africa, and they control the army and the police. Only a relatively small, if noble, minority actively support the liberation movement. And the black majority them-

JOHN CARLIN is the Southern Africa correspondent of the *Independent* of London.

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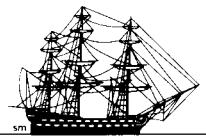

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selves have not been exposed to anything like the levels of education of Eastern Europeans. Their expectations in life are thus markedly lower.

Mandela, then, could not play the role of either an Ayatollah or a Vaclav Havel even if he wanted to. And F. W. de Klerk has calculated as much, for otherwise he would not have ordered his release. Indeed, de Klerk has secured what appears to be a commitment to peaceful change and negotiations from Mandela, who knows that his abilities would be best channeled in the service of his people—not in the role of the rabble-rousing demagogue.

Mandela had learned patience before going to prison. Thirty years ago he delivered an address from the dock in the famous Treason Trial—in which he and 155 other defendants were acquitted after four years in court—where he demonstrated his willingness to compromise with the government if the result was the end of minority rule. He told the court that he wished to talk with the government, and said that he would accept an agreement whereby for five years the black population had only partial representation in Parliament, after which the situation would be reviewed again. He understood, he said, that whites might not be ready to be politically dominated by non-whites:

> In my view that would be a victory, my lords; we would have taken a significant step towards the attainment of universal adult suffrage for Africans, and we would then, for the five years, say, we will suspend civil disobedience. . . . And we will then devote the intervening period for the purpose of educating the country, the Europeans, to see that these changes can be brought about and that it would bring about better racial understanding, better racial harmony in the country.

Such a proposal today would be music to de Klerk's ears. He will not hear it, for there is a greater urgency in black demands now, more blood has been shed along the way, the sense of grievance is greater and so are the expectations. The spirit of compromise does continue to guide Mandela. He smiles, he exudes Christian charity, but there is iron in his soul. He has said that his commitment to "armed struggle" will continue so long as the apartheid system persists in employing violence as an instrument of political persuasion, so long, specifically, as the state of emergency—with the extraordinary powers it grants the police—remains in place and political prisoners remain behind bars. International sanctions must continue until the process toward a nonracial, democratic society becomes irreversible.

But Mandela's strategy has been to beat the government with one hand and dangle a carrot with the other. And it is the carrot approach, he has made resoundingly clear, that he hopes will prevail. If Mandela had one opportunity to inflame the masses Ayatollah-style, to urge them to storm the government buildings and seek vengeance against white oppression, it was at this massive "welcome home" rally in Soweto's Soccer City stadium. In South Africa's biggest-ever political gathering, more than 120,000 people packed into the creaking, overflowing stadium. Such was the euphoria on the crowd's first sighting of Mandela that one felt they would have done anything he would have bidden.

As it turned out, the speech was pointedly low-key. Mandela returned to Soweto rather like a father who comes home after a long absence to find that things are in something of a mess, but who understands—indulgent more than stern—that the family did the best they could under appalling circumstances. He dedicated virtually the entire first half of the thirty-two-minute speech to local Soweto issues and, by implication, to issues that affect all the black townships around the country.

He was "greatly disturbed" by the statistics of crime in Soweto, and at the knowledge that some people purporting to support "the liberation struggle" were using violence against their own people. He also made clear his rejection of school boycotts, the belief of many black militants that "liberation must come before education." He ordered black schoolchildren to go back to their classes and learn. In short, he was urging black people, for all the iniquities of apartheid, to put their own house in order. And then he asked them, in the keynote message of his speech, to behave in such a manner as to reassure the white population that all South Africans, of all races, can live in equality and harmony together:

> The fears of whites about their rights and place in a South Africa they do not control exclusively are an obstacle we must understand and address. I stated in 1964 that I and the ANC are as opposed to black domination as we are to white domination. We must accept, however, that our statements and declarations alone will not be sufficient to allay the fears of white South Africans. We must clearly demonstrate our goodwill to our white compatriots and convince them by our conduct and arguments that a South Africa without apartheid will be a better home for all. A new South Africa has to eliminate the racial hatred and suspicion caused by apartheid and offer guarantees to all its citizens of peace, security, and prosperity.

Mandela, from that very first gesture with the white family on the side of the road, has set himself up as a statesman just as much as a liberation leader. He has seen that the two roles must go hand in hand. Apartheid is founded on white fears. Remove those fears, and apartheid is gone.

De Klerk, for all his boldness of vision, still harbors some fears. He has made clear his rejection of black majority rule. He hopes that in negotiations with Mandela and other black leaders a new constitution will emerge that will give everybody the vote, but that will also provide guarantees for white citizens that they will not be overrun, engulfed, and driven either to exile or to take up arms. The new battle cry of de Klerk's National Party has become "protection for minority rights," which means inbuilt constitutional protection for whites guaranteeing that their political power exceeds their numerical strength. He has not escaped his party's traditional

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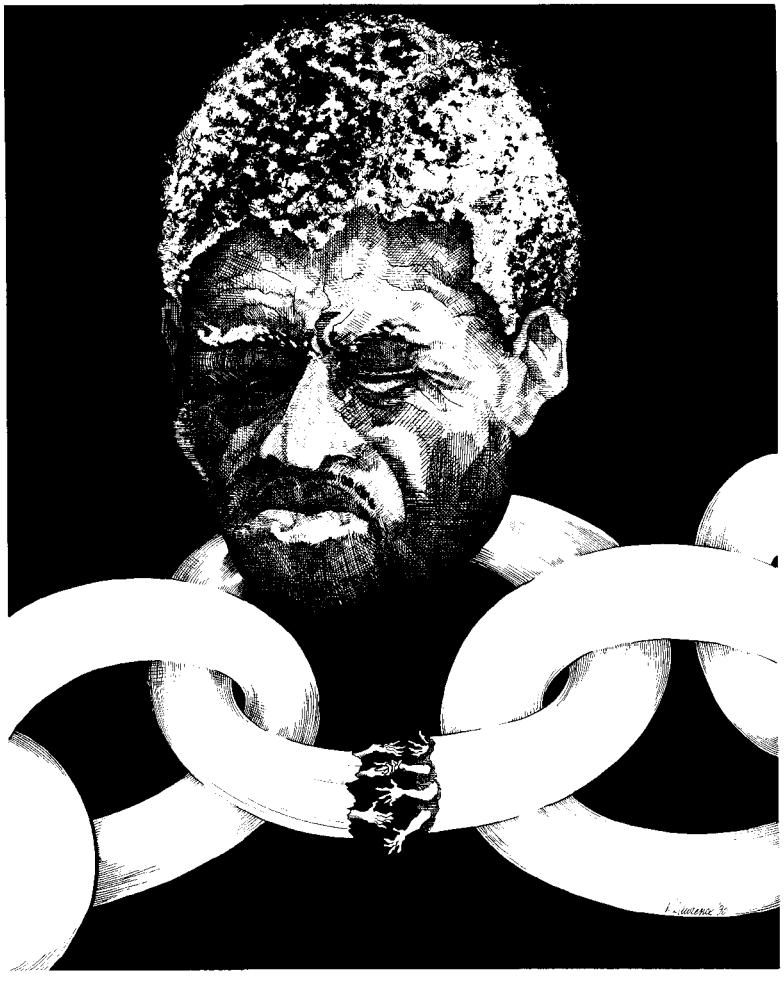
fixation with racial groups. A one-person, one-vote, winner-take-all system of government in the manner understood by most Western democracies is not something de Klerk is ready to contemplate.

It is, however, what Mandela and the African National Congress have always fought for. Was there room for accommodation, Mandela was asked at his first press conference? "The ANC is very much concerned to address the question of the concern of whites over the demand of one person, one vote," he replied. "They insist on structural guarantees—that is, the whites—to ensure that realization of this demand does not result in the domination of whites by blacks. We understand those feelings, and the ANC is concerned to address that problem and to find a solution which will suit both the blacks and the whites of this country."

A few days later Mandela demonstrated that government officials, who had been meeting with him frequently in prison since de Klerk took office in September, had not been wrong in describing him as a moderate. He made it plain what the opening negotiating position of the ANC would be. The government's "concept of group [by which it means "race"] rights means they are not ready to accept the principle of one man, one vote, but we are determined to negotiate on the basis of this demand." But, he said, "compromises must be made in respect to every issue, as long as that compromise is in the interest not only of one population group but of the country as a whole. That is the nature of compromises. I am convinced that in discussions between the ANC and the government, we will be able to find a solution which will be accepted by everybody." And he declared, "We are ready for honorable compromises without surrendering our principles."

This is a man de Klerk can do business with. Indeed, it is fitting that in a country obsessed with the workings of the law, if not necessarily with justice, two lawyers should emerge today as the dueling protagonists of the South African drama. In the attempt to understand the sort of man Mandela is, it is crucial to take into account his legal background and his legal habits of mind. These make him the ideal man to engage in the coming lengthy and complex negotiations with the government.

Mandela learned his legal trade in a Johannesburg firm in 1942. Ten years later he and the current president of the ANC, Oliver Tambo, set up the first black law firm in South Africa. Before Mandela was sentenced to life for sabotage in June 1964, courtrooms had become a second home. The Treason Trial lasted from 1956 to 1960. When he was not helping conduct the defense case, he was acting as the prisoners' spokesman. Had they been convicted as charged, the accused would have faced the death sentence. As it turned out, everybody was acquitted, in large part due to the effectiveness of Mandela's interventions.



NELSON MANDELA BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

The characteristic that distinguishes him from the average anti-apartheid campaigner is this lawyer's propensity to examine all aspects of a question, not the least to attempt to understand the problems faced by the South African government. Those in the black liberation movement who fear that by talking with government ministers in recent months he has risked falling into a trap should remind themselves that Mandela has always made sure to know the enemy in order to exploit his difficulties and limitations. It was not for nothing that on Robben Island he painstakingly, and very successfully, taught himself to speak Afrikaans, the language of the ruling white elite. As his Johannesburg lawyer, one of those who has known him best in recent years, puts it: "Mandela is a chess player five moves ahead of anyone else in the game."

By releasing Mandela, de Klerk has allowed into the political arena a figure whose presence automatically redresses the imbalance in the black-white exchange in South Africa. In the last several weeks, for the first time, the disfranchised black majority has been competing politically with the ruling white minority on equal terms. The ANC—exiled, imprisoned, or underground

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for three decades—has suddenly assumed the center stage of South African politics, complete with a party machine ready to shift into full gear.

Before the start of one of Mandela's press conferences, a gray-suited official of the ANC-allied United Democratic Front was asked what he thought of the state president's latest pronouncements. "Which state president?" the official replied, straight-faced. South Africa indeed now has two presidents. Any pronouncement by Mandela carries, and will continue to carry, at least as much weight as anything de Klerk has to say. Thus Mandela utters the word "nationalization" and, quite apart from the instant stock market tumble, he places squarely on the agenda of future negotiations an issue that had barely been mentioned before his release: the economy. He utters the words "armed struggle" and a Cabinet minister instantly responds in Parliament. He receives more invitations from foreign governments in a week than de Klerk has had in six months. The United States, Britain, Japan, and India, among others, are falling over themselves to see who will be granted the honor first.

To the gravitas, judiciousness, and extraordinary charm of the statesman-like Mandela has been added a politic move by ANC leaders in Lusaka. In response to de Klerk's bold announcements of February 2, when—notably—he ended the thirty-year legal ban on the ANC, they declared that they would urge a meeting with de Klerk as soon as possible. They immediately set about re-establishing offices inside the country and prepared for a mass homeward-bound exodus of the ANC's long-exiled members. Before too long, the ANC—to which Mandela has insisted on expressing his undying loyalty—will be operating as a legal political force inside the country. De Klerk, as a senior ANC official put it, has created "a new space, a new chemistry."

That is the key. New space for the ANC to operate, new chemistry determining the rules of political engagement. And in such conditions, de Klerk is not in full charge anymore. He has set about a process of political liberalization that, as Gorbachev has found, necessarily precipitates unforeseen, not to say unintended, consequences. By seizing the opportunities presented by de Klerk, by wrenching the initiative away from his hands, Mandela and the ANC have taught the Afrikaner population the bitter, and frighteningly novel, lesson that they cannot control the course of history forever—which was exactly what apartheid, social engineering gone mad, had attempted to do.

Of course, de Klerk isn't the only one facing difficulties of adjustment. Black liberation politics was a relatively simple business during the long decades of brutish apartheid oppression. It was straightforward protest politics, with the apartheid enemy providing little opportunity for much in the way of flexible, imaginative maneuvering. The issue of negotiations, which de Klerk has obliged all parties to address seriously, has inevitably provoked confusion, debate, and division. Mandela is known to have favored negotiations with the government for at least a year, but just eight months ago the very mention of the "N-word" to the average ANC militant provoked an outraged response. Protest politics meant embracing the notion that the revolutionary seizure of power was feasible. It is in large measure due to Mandela's force of personality and persuasion, even from behind bars, that last December 9 the ANC and all its allies finally endorsed the negotiating strategy at a so-called Conference for a Democratic Future, at which more than 1,000 national and regional organizations loyal to the ANC were represented.

The indications are that Mandela's conception of politics as the art of the possible, and not the desirable, will prevail. The South African Communist Party, a longtime ally of the ANC, is with him on this. As many as half of the ANC leaders who sit on the national executive committee belong to the SACP. The ANC and SACP positions are, thus, the same, and may only change once "liberation" is complete. In other words, the SACP, which has significantly moderated its politics under the influence of events in Eastern Europe, sees its principal goal as ending apartheid. The strictly ideological debate will come later. For this reason Mandela has made it clear that he is happy to be in alliance with the SACP, which provides the ANC with much of its intellectual backbone.

Some other black factions reject negotiations out of hand. The Pan-Africanist Congress and the Black Consciousness Movement—people of a more patient, Vietnamese mind-set—are prepared to wait for as long as it takes for liberation on their own terms. For them, negotiation means determining the terms of the outright surrender of the white establishment before installing some form of socialist black majority rule. Down the line they may cause the ANC problems, especially if negotiations become tortuous or just plain bogged down. But both the PAC and the BCM command tiny popular support compared with the ANC monolith, and the Mandela juggernaut seems likely to reduce them to mere nuisance factors. In any case, should it become evident that de Klerk is not, after all, serious about ceding white power, Mandela will be the first to abandon negotiations and urge the masses to insurrection.

De Klerk's big problem now is that many, probably the majority of the Afrikaner population, stubbornly refuse to follow his lead. The great risk de Klerk took when he announced the unbanning of the ANC and the release of Mandela was that his own people would turn against him. He may come to regret his courage. A shamelessly pro-National Party Johannesburg newspaper, the *Citizen*, said in an editorial five days after Mandela's release: "The right-wing backlash, which some members of the government and others regarded as being of little significance, is growing menacingly." The editorial came in response to a staggeringly big pro-apartheid rally staged by the unapologetically racist Conservative Party in Pretoria on the Thursday after Mandela's release.

Emotions were as intense as they were at the welcome

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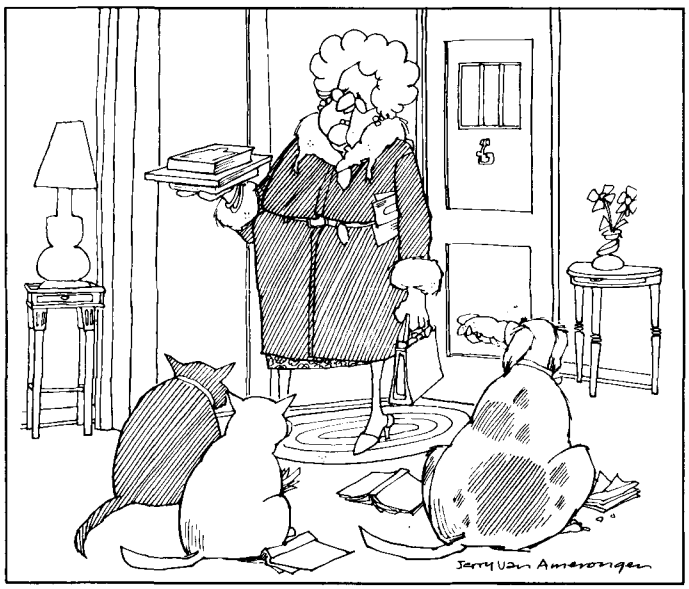

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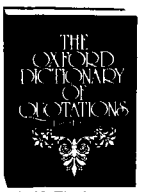

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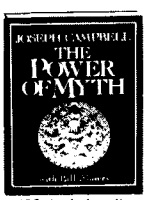

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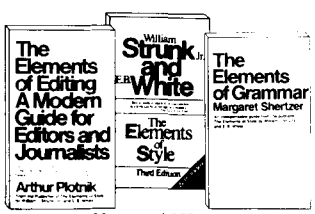
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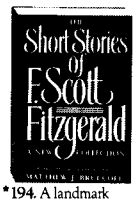

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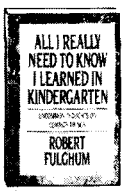

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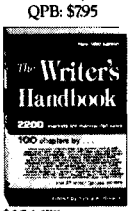

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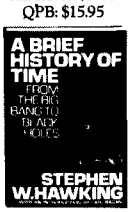

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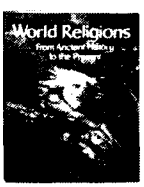

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rally for Mandela in Soweto. But the mood was different. At the Soccer City stadium there was a smell of victory in the air, the sense of impending victory of a people who believe that soon they would be winning what they had never had. At Pretoria's Paul Kruger Square, named after the Bible-bashing fundamentalist who ruled over the Transvaal Republic from 1883 to 1902, a mood of quiet despair underlay the pretended euphoria. These were a people who fear they were about to lose everything. The biggest roar of the night came when the Conservative Party leader, Andries Treurnicht, declared: "The Afrikaner is a friendly tiger, but don't mess around with him." Treurnicht, a former preacher, finished his speech and led the crowd in prayer. "O Lord hear us," he intoned, and every person there, every child, every brownshirted neo-Nazi, bowed his head, clasped his hands and closed his eyes reverently tight. More evidence existed of the Ayatollah factor on the South African right, one sensed, than on the left.

So far their bark has been worse than their bite. There has been much talk of strikes, marches, and even taking to arms. But there were signs that, if pushed just a little further, the talk might be transformed into action. The militancy of the ANC might be replaced by the militancy of the Conservatives and their extremist allies. "The struggle shall continue," read one of the many banners on display. De Klerk may be forced to think twice about his plans to "normalize" political life in South Africa, as Mandela calls it. A senior government official told a group of journalists recently that Mandela should not demand change too quickly, for to do so would be to hand power to Treurnicht.

De Klerk, one may be sure, communicated these worries to Mandela in the two meetings they had while Mandela was still a prisoner. And Mandela has been responsive, in particular with his emphasis on seeking to placate white fears. With a magnanimity unprecedented in an ANC leader, he has spoken of de Klerk with praise. "One thing that I have been able to assess is that Mr. de Klerk is a man of integrity. . . . He seems to be fully aware of the danger to a public figure of making undertakings which he fails to honor, and I think that is a very promising sign."

De Klerk has described Mandela kindly too, as "a friendly and interesting man." It is not quite a marriage made in heaven, but clearly the two men have crucial objectives in common, peace and negotiations being foremost among them. The signs are that increasingly they will enter into a kind of partnership, a joint presidency of South Africa in which they will attempt to steer the country away from confrontation and toward reconciliation, seeking to smooth over their respective differences before hitting upon a modus vivendi acceptable to black and white. And if they can impose their wills on their respective camps, they will engage in the decisive political battle that may prove to be the South African drama's final act in a manner befitting the solemn civility of the courtroom. •

Close enough for moral discomfort.

ARE ANIMALS PEOPLE TOO?

By Robert Wright

I recently interviewed several animal rights activists in hopes that they would say some amusing, crazy-sounding things that might liven up this article. More often than not I was disappointed. They would come close to making unreservedly extremist pronouncements but then step back from the brink, leaving me with a quote that was merely provocative. For example, Ingrid Newkirk, co-founder of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), seemed on the verge of conceding that Frank Perdue is no better than Adolf Hitler—a proposition that technically follows from her premise that animals possess the moral status of humans (and from references in animal rights literature to the ongoing "animal holocaust"). But she wouldn't go all the way. "He's the animals' Hitler, I'll give you that," she said. "If you were a chicken . . . you wouldn't think he was Mother Teresa." The other co-founder of PETA, Alex Pacheco, was not much more helpful. "You and I are equal to the lobsters when it comes to being boiled alive," he said, raising my hopes. But, he added, "I don't mean I couldn't decide which one to throw in, myself or the lobster."

The biggest disappointment was a woman who went by the pseudonym "Helen." She was a member of the Animal Liberation Front, a shadowy group that goes around breaking into scientific laboratories, documenting the conditions therein, and sometimes burning down the labs (minus the animals, which are typically

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"liberated"—taken somewhere else—in the process). Given all the intrigue involved in interviewing "Helen"—I had to "put out the word" that I wanted to talk with an ALF member, and when she called she always used a streetside phone booth and never left a number—I expected a rich encounter. This hope grew when I found out that she had participated in a recent lab-burning at the University of Arizona. But as professed arsonists go, Helen seemed like a very nice and fairly reasonable person. She was a combination of earnest moral anguish ("For the most part, people just aren't aware of how much suffering and death goes into what they eat and wear. . . . Most people just literally don't know") and crisp professionalism ("Whether I have any animosity toward [laboratory researchers] is irrelevant. . . . I just do everything I can to move them into a different job category"). And though her reverence for life may strike you as creepy—she picks up spiders off the floor and moves them outdoors, rather than squash them—it is not unbounded. She assured me that if termites were destroying her home, she would call an exterminator.

One reason for this general failure to gather satisfactorily extremist quotes is that animal rights activists have become more media-savvy, developing a surer sense for when they are being baited. But another reason is my own failure to find their ideas extremist. Slowly I seem to be getting drawn into the logic of animal rights. I still eat meat, wear a leather belt, and support the use of animals in important scientific research. But not without a certain amount of cognitive dissonance.

The animal rights movement, which has mushroomed during the past decade, most conspicuously in the growth of PETA (membership around 300,000), is distinguished from the animal welfare movement, as represented by, for example, the Humane Society of the United States. Animal *welfare* activists don't necessarily claim that animals are the moral equivalent of humans, just that animals' feelings deserve some consideration; we shouldn't needlessly hurt them—with pointless experimentation, say, or by making fur coats. And just about every thinking person, if pressed, will agree that animal welfare is a legitimate idea. Hardly anyone believes in kicking dogs.

But the truth is that animal welfare is just the top of a slippery slope that leads to animal rights. Once you buy the premise that animals can experience pain and pleasure, and that their welfare therefore deserves *some* consideration, you're on the road to comparing yourself with a lobster. There may be some exit ramps along the way—plausible places to separate welfare from rights—but I can't find any. And if you don't manage to find one, you wind up not only with a rather more sanguine view of animal rights but also with a more cynical view of the concept of human rights and its historical evolution.

None of this is to say that a few minutes of philosophical reflection will lead you to start wearing dumpling-shaped fake-leather shoes, sporting a "Meat is Murder" button, or referring to your pet dog as your "companion animal." The stereotype about the people who do these things—that they're ill at ease in human society, even downright antagonistic toward other humans—is generally wrong, but the stereotype that they're, well, *different* from most people is not. These are dyed-in-the-wool activists, and if they weren't throwing themselves into this cause, they would probably be throwing themselves into some other cause. (Pacheco, for example, had originally planned to become a priest.) Moreover, very few of them were converted to the movement solely or mainly via philosophy. Many will say they were critically influenced by the book *Animal Liberation* (1975), written by the Australian ethicist Peter Singer, but reading Singer was for most of them merely a ratifying experience, a seal of philosophical approval for their intuitive revulsion at animal suffering. Pacheco received a copy of the book the same week he got grossed out while touring a Canadian slaughterhouse. He later gave a copy to Newkirk, who was then chief of Animal Disease Control for the District of Columbia. Around that time she spent a day trying to rescue some starving, neglected horses that were locked in their stalls and mired in mud. That's when it hit her: "It didn't make sense. I had spent the whole day trying to get some starving horses out of a stall and here I was going home to eat some other animal." This gut perception is a recurring theme, as crystallized by Helen: "I just realized that if I wouldn't eat my dog, why should I eat a cow?"

Good question. And implicit in it is the core of the case for animal rights: the modest claim—not disputed by anyone who has ever owned a dog or cat, so far as I know—that animals are sentient beings, capable of pleasure and pain. People who would confine natural rights to humans commonly talk about the things we have that animals don't—complex language, sophisticated reasoning, a highly evolved culture. But none of these is important, for moral purposes, in the way that sheer sentience is.

One way to appreciate this is through a simple thought experiment. Suppose there's a planet populated by organisms that look and act exactly like humans. They walk, talk, flirt, go to law school, blush in response to embarrassing comments, and discuss their impending deaths in glum tones. Now suppose it turns out they're automatons, made out of silicon chips—or even made out of flesh and blood. The important thing is that all their behavior—their blushing, their discussion of death—is entirely a product of the physical circuitry inside their heads and isn't accompanied by any subjective experience; they can't feel pain, pleasure, or anything else. In other words (to use the terminology of Thomas Nagel), it isn't like anything to be them.

Is there anything particularly immoral about slapping one of them in the face? Most everyone would say: obviously not, since it doesn't hurt. How about killing one of them? Again, no; their death doesn't preclude

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their future experience of happiness, as with real live humans, or cause any pain for friends and relatives. There is no apparent reason to bestow any moral status whatsoever on these creatures, much less the exalted status that the human species now enjoys. They have powerful brains, complex language, and high culture, but none of this makes them significant.

Now rearrange the variables: subtract all these attributes and add sentience. In other words, take all the robots off the planet and populate it with non-human animals: chimps, armadillos, dogs, etc. Is there anything immoral about gratuitously hurting or killing one of these? Do they have individual rights? Most people would answer yes to the first question, and some would answer yes to the second. But the main point is that few people would quickly and easily say "no" to either, because these are harder questions than the robot question. Sentience lies at the core of our moral thinking, and language, intelligence, etc., lie nearer the periphery. Sentience seems definitely a necessary and arguably a sufficient condition for the possession of high moral status (experiments 1 and 2, respectively), whereas the other attributes are arguably necessary but definitely not sufficient (experiments 2 and 1, respectively).

The best way to get a better fix on exactly which traits are prerequisites for moral status is simply to try to explain why they *should* be. Take sentience first. We all agree from personal experience that pain is a bad thing, that no one should have the right to inflict it on us, and consistency (part of any moral system) dictates that we agree not to inflict it on anyone else. Makes sense. But now try to say something comparably compelling about why great reasoning ability or complex language are crucial to moral status. Also, try to do the same with self-consciousness—our awareness of our own existence. (This is another uniquely human attribute commonly invoked in these discussions, but we couldn't isolate it in experiment 1 above because an organism can't have it without having sentience.)

If you accept this challenge, you'll almost certainly go down one of two paths, neither of which will get you very far. First, you may try to establish that self-consciousness, complex language, etc., are the hallmarks of "spirit," the possession of which places us in some special category. This is a perfectly fine thing to believe, but it's hard to *argue* for. It depends much more on religious conviction than on any plausible line of reasoning.

The second path people take in asserting the moral significance of uniquely human attributes is even less successful, because it leads to a booby trap. This is the argument that self-consciousness and reason and language give humans a dimension of suffering that mere animals lack: because we can anticipate pain and death; and because we know that death will represent the end of our consciousness forever; and because we recognize that threats to one citizen may represent a threat to us all—because of all this, the protection of human rights is essential to everyone's peace of mind; the torture or murder of anyone in town, as conveyed to the public via language and then reflected upon at length, makes everyone tremendously fearful. So a robust conception of individual rights is essential for the welfare of a human society in a way that it isn't for, say, the welfare of a chicken society.

Sounds nice, but it amounts to philosophical surrender. To rely completely on this argument is to concede that language, reason, and self-consciousness are morally important *only* to the extent that they magnify suffering or happiness. Pain and pleasure, in other words, are the currency of moral assessment. The several uniquely human attributes may revaluate the currency, but the currency possesses some value with or without them. And many, if not all, nonhuman animals seem to possess the currency in some quantity. So unless you can come up with a non-arbitrary reason for saying that their particular quantities are worthless while our particular quantities are precious, you have to start thinking about animals in a whole new light. This explains why Peter Singer, in *Animal Liberation*, readily admits that the human brain is unique in its ability to thus compound suffering.

Once the jaws of this philosophical trap have closed on the opponents of animal rights, no amount of struggling can free them. Let them insist that language, reason, and self-consciousness *immensely* raise the moral stakes for humans. Let them add, even, that our sheer neurological complexity makes us experience raw pain more profoundly than, say, dogs or even mice do. Grant them, in other words, that in the grand utilitarian calculus, one day of solid suffering by a single human equals one day's suffering by 10,000 laboratory rats. Grant them all of this, and they still lose, because the point is that animals have now been *admitted* to the utilitarian calculus. If it is immoral, as we all believe it is, to walk up to a stranger and inflict 1/10,000 of one day's suffering (nine seconds' worth), then it is equally immoral to walk up and inflict one day's suffering on a single laboratory rat.

Actually, granting animals utilitarian value doesn't technically mean you have to extend individual rights to them. As far as sheer philosophical consistency goes, you can equally well take rights away from humans. You can say: sure, it makes sense to kill 100 baboons to save the life of one human, but it also makes sense to kill a human to save the life of 100 baboons. Whatever you say, though, you have to go one way or the other, letting such equations work either in both directions or in neither. Unless you can create a moral ratchet called "human rights"—and I don't see any way to do it—you have to choose between a planet on which every sentient creature has rights and a planet on which none does.

And of course if no creature on earth has rights, then it can make sense to kill a human not just for the sake of 100 baboons, but for the sake of two humans—or just in the name of the greater good. In other words, the logic

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Pet causes

A visit with monkeys was not on the agenda of Representative Robert Dornan, the garrulous conservative from Orange County, California, when he attended the Republican National Convention in New Orleans in 1988. But his daughter Kathleen, a twenty-eight-year-old actress, insisted. "Please go out to the primate center at Tulane," she said. He balked. "Please, Dad," she said. "Please."

So at 7 o'clock one morning, Dornan drove to Tulane University, which houses 4,000 monkeys at the Delta Regional Primate Research Center. Dornan was particularly interested in nine of them, the Silver Spring monkeys. "They are a cause célèbre in the animal-loving community," he said. In research at a Silver Spring, Maryland, lab funded by the National Institutes of Health, each monkey had the feeling in an arm and shoulder eliminated. But tests on them were halted in 1981 when the lab was prosecuted for animal abuse, and the monkeys were shipped to Tulane. Animal rights groups want them moved to a zoo or college, where they'd be cared for and spared further experimentation. NIH says no. When Dornan saw the monkeys, he was touched by their pathetic plight.

He and another conservative GOP representative, Robert Smith of New Hampshire, have taken up the cause of the monkeys. Their crusade pits them against two administrations (first Reagan's, now Bush's) they strongly support. But that's the way the animal rights issue works in Washington—strangely. It produces unlikely alliances and small but intense conflicts, often among friends.

Though zealous on behalf of the monkeys, Dornan and Smith are leery of their allies. When a lab conducting research on animals is attacked by animal rights crazies, says Dornan, "We sit on the House floor and say, 'Whoa, these people can get into a lot of trouble.' " Still, both accepted awards as Legislator of the Year in 1989 from People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, a militant, influential animal rights organization. "I'm not opposed to all animal research," says Smith. "I don't oppose hunting. I eat meat." Dornan notes he wears leather shoes.

Smith buttonholes any administration official who's accessible to talk up the monkeys. He's written to Bush and pleaded with Ed Rogers, a White House official. He got PETA chairman Alex Pacheco to write to Rogers outlining the terms for transferring the monkeys. For now, the White House has declined to intervene. Smith and Dornan are also pushing legislation that would force NIH to give up the monkeys. In the fall of 1988 they almost succeeded. Dornan flew across the country to join a meeting between NIH and PETA in Smith's office. The congressmen thought an agreement had been reached, but it fell through.

With Constance Horner as undersecretary of Health and Human Services, an agreement is unlikely. She has emerged as the administration's leading critic of animal rights. PETA has tried to persuade her to modify her position. Last fall it got Craig Fuller, who was Bush's chief of staff when Bush was vice president, to invite Horner to a dinner with Jane Goodall, the scientist famous for her studies of gorillas. She refused.

Horner, a neoconservative, regards the animal rights movement as both a medical and an intellectual threat. "We must not permit the activities of a handful of extremists to deprive millions of the life-sustaining and life-enhancing fruits of biomedical research," she declared last October. "We must maintain the momentum of our great scientific revolution." The doctrine of animal rights "purports to elevate the status of all living things," she said, but "in the end [it] debases the status of mankind and endangers our essential freedoms."

Every bit as fervent on the subject is Dr. Fred Goodwin, the head of the Alcohol, Drug Abuse and Mental Health Administration, which funds medical experiments on animals. Goodwin said it was a mistake in the 1980s to treat the complaints of animal rights activists seriously. "The more we did this, the more energized and successful they became." Goodwin, a psychiatrist, says PETA wants the monkeys "to use them for publicity." Dornan and Smith deny this.

Another skirmish in the animal rights battle involves legislation authorizing the FBI to investigate attacks on federally funded health research facilities. HHS officials have talked to the FBI and are convinced the legislation is needed. But the Justice Department didn't support the bill, and HHS Assistant Secretary James Mason was prepared to voice mild opposition in a House appearance in February. A last-minute memo from White House counsel Boyden Gray, however, instructed Mason to go further and state flatly that the administration strongly opposed the legislation as unneeded, officials said.

Still another internecine battle put budget director Richard Darman at odds with one of his assistants, Jay Plager. When the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, an agency of the Agriculture Department, issued regulations last year on medical research on animals, Plager said they violated longtime HHS policies. Among other things, APHIS sought to impose rigid "engineering" standards on research labs, not more flexible "performance" standards. This would raise research costs by $1 billion, APHIS conceded. (Researchers claimed $2 billion.) Agriculture Secretary Clayton Yeutter appealed Plager's decision to Darman, who overruled Plager. Last August Plager told a House subcommittee he was still "bleeding" from the wound Darman had dealt him. Soon after that he left the administration.

Despite all this, the tougher standards haven't been imposed yet. Why? The research community hired a skilled Washington attorney, Michael Horowitz, who was general counsel of the Office of Management and Budget in the Reagan administration. He began lobbying Bush administration officials—Horner, deputy domestic policy adviser William Roper, Gray, and others. The standards are now in limbo.

For Dornan, support for animal rights leads to anxious moments. At Bush's inauguration, he spotted a woman wearing a full-length leopard coat. Dornan figured she was a rich Republican and expected to be twitted by colleagues about this. He wasn't. When she came closer, Dornan recognized the woman as Jim Wright's wife.

FRED BARNES

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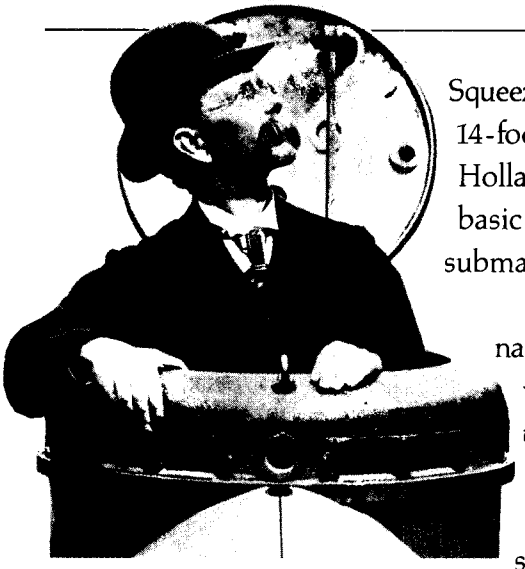
Our first submarine did only one remarkable thing. It came back up.



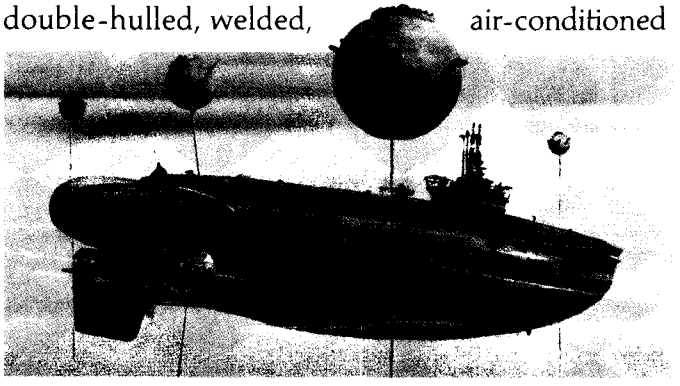
John Holland invented the first submarine accepted by the U.S. Navy. Amazed reports said, "She goes like a fish and dives better than one."

Squeezed into a crude, 14-foot craft, John P. Holland proved the basic principles of submarines in 1878. His poetically named "Boat No. 1" was hauled to the Passaic River by 16 stallions for testing. It stuck in the mud, it leaked, but it came back up.

To us, the only thing more remarkable than the submarine itself was the courage of the submariner. Something that's still true today.

Holland got his Electric Boat Company, our earliest ancestor, off to a strong start in 1900, when the 74-ton submersible Holland became the U.S. Navy's first submarine. Showing his confidence in this new type vessel, President Theodore Roosevelt alarmed Secret Service bodyguards by taking an unscheduled dive aboard an A-class Plunger, August 26, 1905.

Running silent as well as deep became possible in 1933, when Electric Boat launched Cuttlefish, the first double-hulled, welded, air-conditioned submarine. She was the prototype for all World War II Navy fleet submarines.



All WWII fleet submarines were based on Cuttlefish, the first submarine to be welded, rather than riveted, and a technical milestone.

USS Helena, 688-class submarine.

But it was on January 17, 1955, that we introduced the most dramatic improvement in submarines since John Holland and Boat No. 1. It was Nautilus, the world's first atom-powered vessel. And in an astonishing adventure, she became the first submarine to sail under the North Pole.

Today, our Tridents, the world's most advanced submarines, routinely patrol for 70 days without surfacing. Longer than the Washington Monument is tall, they are so carefully made that they cruise in virtual silence.

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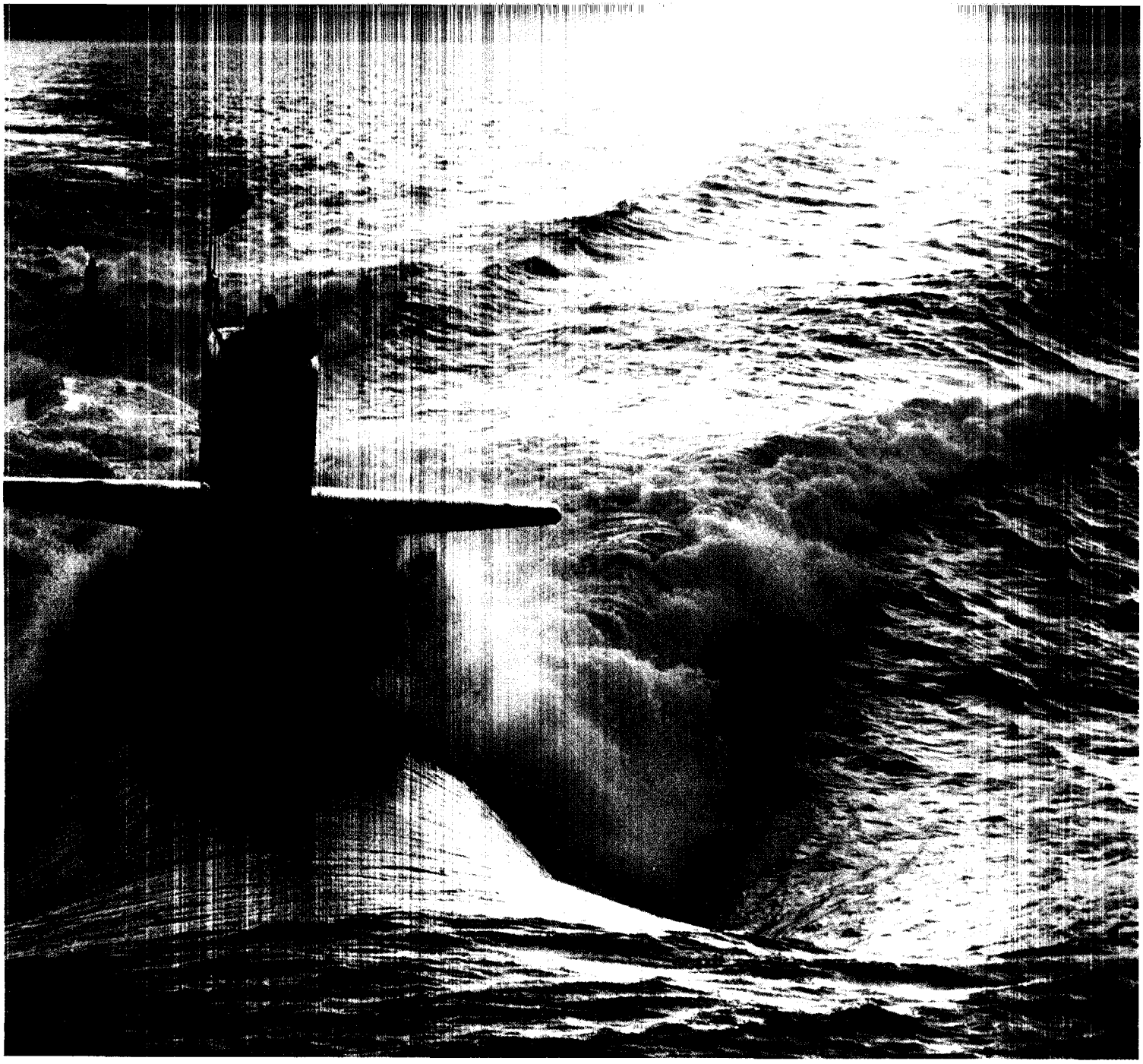

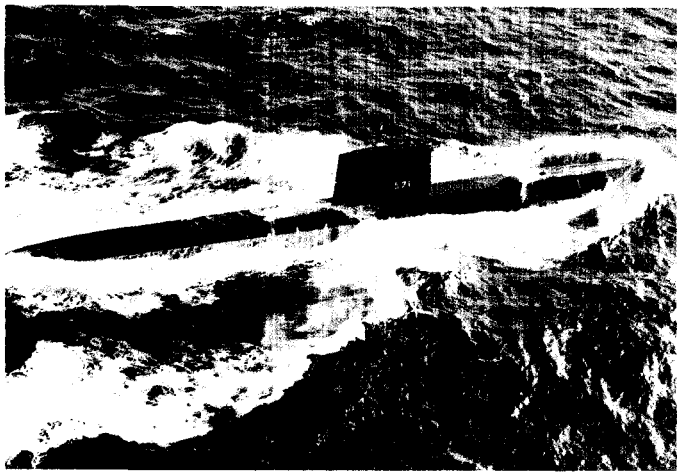

USS Nautilus was the first vessel to radio, "Underway on nuclear power." She then became the first to sail under the North Pole.

Yet innovations continue. Seawolf, a new class of submarine now under construction in our yards, will advance submarine science into the next century.

Seawolf re-proves two principles first proved by John Holland and Boat No. 1. That under deep water is found man's highest technology. And his highest courage.

Dedication to both has kept us improving American submarines for 90 years.

GENERAL DYNAMICS

A Strong Company For A Strong Country

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used by animal rights activists turns out to play into the hands of the Adolf Hitlers of the world no less than the Albert Schweitzers. In *Darkness at Noon*, when Ivanov describes Stalin's rule as belonging to the school of "vivisection morality," Arthur Koestler is onto something more than good allegory.

Before figuring out whether to follow this logic toward vegetarianism or totalitarianism, let's remove it from the realm of abstraction. Spending an evening watching videotapes supplied by PETA—such as *The Animals Film*, narrated by Julie Christie—is a fairly disturbing experience. This is partly because the people who made it gave it a subtle shrillness that reflects what is most annoying about the animal rights movement. There are man-on-the-street interviews conducted by an obnoxious, self-righteous interrogator demanding to know how people can own dogs and eat Big Macs; there is the assumption that viewers will find the late McDonald's founder Ray Kroc—a seemingly likable guy shown innocently discussing how he settled on the name "McDonald's"—abhorrent; there is a simple-minded anti-capitalist undercurrent (as if factory farmers in socialist countries spent their time giving foot massages to hogs); and there is grating atonal music meant to make the sight of blood more disturbing than it naturally is.

And that's plenty disturbing, thank you. Take, for example, the chickens hung by their feet from a conveyer belt that escorts them through an automatic throat slicing machine—this the culmination of a life spent on the poultry equivalent of a New York subway platform at rush hour. Or consider the deep basketfuls of male chicks, struggling not to smother before they're ground into animal feed. There's also, naturally, the veal: a calf raised in a crate so small that it can't even turn around, much less walk—the better to keep the flesh tender. There are wild furry animals cut almost in half by steel-jawed traps but still conscious. There are rabbits getting noxious chemicals sprayed in their eyes by cosmetics companies.

And these are the animals that *don't* remind you of human beings. Watching these portions of *The Animals Film* is a day at the zoo compared with watching non-human primates suffer. If you don't already have a strong sense of identity with chimpanzees, gorillas, and the like—if you doubt that they're capable of crude reasoning, anticipating pain, feeling and expressing deep affection for one another—I suggest you patronize your local zoo (or prison, as animal rights activists would have it) and then get hold of a copy of the ethologist Frans de Waal's two amazing books, *Peacemaking Among Primates* and *Chimpanzee Politics*. The commonly cited fact that chimps share about ninety-eight percent of our genes is misleading, to be sure; a handful of genes affecting the brain's development can make a world of difference. Still, if you can watch a toddler chimp or gorilla for long without wanting to file for adoption, you should seek professional help.

In videotapes that Helen helped steal in 1984 from the University of Pennsylvania's Head Injury Clinical Research Center, anesthetized baboons are strapped down and their heads placed in boxlike vices that are violently snapped sixty degrees sideways by a hydraulic machine. Some of the baboons have what appear to be seizures, some go limp, and none looks very happy. Some of the lab workers—as callous as you'd have to become to do their job, perhaps—stand around and make jokes about it all. It's hard to say how much scientific good came of this, because the scientist in question refuses to talk about it. But watching the tapes, you have to hope that the data were markedly more valuable than what's already available from the study of injured humans. In any event, the experiments were halted after PETA publicized the tapes (though ostensibly for sloppy lab technique, such as occasionally inadequate anesthesia, not because of the violent nature of the experiments).

There are certainly many kinds of animal research that seem justified by any reasonable utilitarian calculus. A case in point is the lab Helen helped set afire at the University of Arizona. Among the researchers whose work was destroyed in the attack is a man named Charles Sterling, who is studying a parasite that causes diarrhea in both animals and humans and kills many children in the Third World every year. There is no way fruitfully to study this parasite in, say, a cell culture, so he uses mice, infecting them with the parasite and thereby inducing a non-lethal spell of diarrhea. (The idea repeated mindlessly by so many animal rights activists—that there's almost always an equally effective non-animal approach to experimentation—is wrong.)

Sterling is one of a handful of workers in this area, and he figures, in over-the-phone, off-the-cuff calculations, that all together they cause around 10,000 to 20,000 mice-weeks of diarrheal discomfort every year. The apparently realistic goal is to find a cure for a disease that kills more than 100,000 children a year. Sounds like a good deal to me. Again, though, the hitch is that to endorse this in a philosophically impeccable way, you have to let go of the concept of human rights, at least as classically conceived.

Then again, human rights isn't what it's classically conceived as being. It isn't some divine law imparted to us from above, or some Platonic truth apprehended through the gift of reason. The idea of individual rights is simply a non-aggression pact among everyone who subscribes to it. It's a deal struck for mutual convenience.

And, actually, it's in some sense a very old deal. A few million years ago, back when human ancestors were not much smarter than chimps, they presumably abided by an implicit and crude concept of individual rights, just as chimps do. Which is to say: life within a troop of, say, fifty or sixty individuals was in practical terms sacred. (Sure, chimps occasionally murder fellow troop members, just as humans do, but this is highly aberrant behavior. Rituals that keep bluster and small-scale ag-

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gression from escalating to fatality are well-developed. And when they fail, and death occurs, an entire chimp colony may be solemn and subdued for hours or longer as if in mourning.) At the same time, these prehuman primates were presumably much like chimps in being fairly disdainful of the lives of fellow species-members who didn't belong to the troop. At some point in human history, as troops of fifty became tribes of thousands, the circle of morally protected life grew commensurately. But the circle didn't at first extend to other tribes. Indeed, wide acceptance of the idea that people of all nations have equal moral rights is quite recent.

How did it all happen? In one of Singer's later and less famous books, *The Expanding Circle* (Farrar, Straus, & Giroux, 1981), whose title refers to exactly this process, he writes as if the circle's expansion has been driven almost Platonically, by the "inherently expansionist nature of reasoning." Once people became civilized and started thinking about the logic behind the reciprocal extension of rights to one another, he says, they were on an intellectual "escalator," and there was no turning back. The idea of uniformly applied ethical strictures "emerges because of the social nature of human beings and the requirements of group living, but in the thought of reasoning beings, it takes on a logic of its own which leads to its extension beyond the bounds of the group."

This, alas, is perhaps too rosy a view. The concept of human rights has grown more inclusive largely through raw politics. Had tribes not found it in their interest to band together—sometimes to massacre other tribes—they wouldn't have had to invent the concept of intertribal rights. Necessity was similarly the mother of moral invention in modern societies. Had the suffragists not deftly wielded political clout, men mightn't have seen the logic of giving women the vote. Had the abolition of slavery not acquired political moment in a war that slaughtered millions, slavery might have long persisted.

Certainly in advances of this sort an important role can be played by intellectual persuasion, by sympathy, by empathy. These can fuse with political power and reinforce it. South Africa today exemplifies the mix. President F. W. de Klerk may or may not truly buy the moral logic behind his (relatively) progressive initiatives, but he definitely has felt the accompanying political pressure, ranging from international sanctions to domestic protest and unrest. On the other hand, behind those sanctions has been, among other things, some genuine empathy and some pure moral logic.

The bad news for animals is twofold. First, in all of these cases—women's rights, the abolition of slavery, ending apartheid—a good part of the political momentum comes from the oppressed themselves. Progress in South Africa never would have begun if blacks there hadn't perceived their own dignity and fought for it. Second, in all of these cases, empathy for the oppressed by influential outsiders came because the outsiders could identify with the oppressed—because, after all, they're people, too. With animal rights, in contrast, (1) the oppressed can never by themselves exert leverage; and (2) the outsiders who work on their behalf, belonging as they do to a different species, must be exquisitely, imaginatively compassionate in order to be drawn to the cause. To judge by history, this is not a recipe for success. It may forever remain the case that, when it comes time to sit down and do the moral bargaining, non-human animals, unlike all past downtrodden organisms, don't have much to bring to the table.

Notwithstanding these handicaps, the animal rights movement has made progress. American fur sales are by some accounts down (perhaps more out of fear of social disapproval than out of newfound sympathy). Some cosmetics companies have stopped abusing rabbit's eyes, finding that there are gentler ways to test products. And the university panels that administer federal laboratory regulations—designed to ensure that animal experimentation is worthwhile and not needlessly cruel—are undoubtedly, in the present climate, being at least as scrupulous as they've ever been (however scrupulous that is).

Even I—never quick to bring my deeds into sync with my words—am making minor gains. I hereby vow never again to eat veal. And it's conceivable that the dovetailing of moral concerns and health fears will get me to give up all red meat, among the most (formerly) sentient kind of flesh on the market. Also: no leather couches or leather jackets in my future. Shoes, yes, couches, no; the least we can do is distinguish between the functionally valuable and the frivolous. (Which also means, of course: people who wear fur coats to advertise their social status—which is to say all people who wear fur coats—should indeed, as the Humane Society's ads have it, be ashamed of themselves.) Finally, for what it's worth, I plan to keep intact my lifelong record of never eating pâté de foie gras, the preternaturally enlarged liver of a goose force-fed through a large tube.

But so long as I so much as eat tuna fish and support the use of primates in AIDS research, how can I still endorse the idea of human rights? How can I consider Stalin guilty of a moral crime and not just a utilitarian arithmetic error? One answer would be to admit that my allegiance to human rights isn't philosophical in the pure sense, but pragmatic; I've implicitly signed a non-aggression pact with all other humans, and Stalin violated the pact, which is immoral in this practical sense of the term. But I'd rather answer that, yes, I think moral law should be more than a deal cut among the powerful, but, no, I haven't been any more successful than the next guy in expunging all moral contradictions from my life. I'll try to do what I can.

If there is a half-decent excuse for this particular contradiction, I suppose it is that human civilization is moving in the right direction. Given where our moral thinking was 200, 500, 5,000 years ago, we're not doing badly. The expanding circle will never get as big as Singer would like, perhaps, but if it grows even slowly and fitfully, we'll be justified in taking a certain chauvinistic pride in our species. •

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BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

United States

In all the flap about Michael Moore's documentary, *Roger & Me*, one odd fact has been scanted. The United Auto Workers union is distributing copies of some of the film's adverse reviews. So is General Motors, but since Moore's film investigates the hardships caused by GM's plant closings in Flint, Michigan, its action is understandable. The UAW, however, often issues broadsides of its own about plant closings; why its opposition to this film sympathetic to workers?

Can it be because the UAW objects to the (widely noted) chronological rearrangements and compression? No, a union spokesman states different objections: the UAW thinks that its president, Owen W. Bieber, is shown as relatively unconcerned about the closings and layoffs. Also, it isn't happy about Moore's friendship with dissidents in the union who oppose Bieber.

In fact the film contains only one quite brief shot of Bieber, speaking vaguely about the Flint situation, and one shot of an apparent dissident voicing his opinions. Any other of Moore's friends who may be in the film are not identifiable as Bieber opponents or union dissidents.

But even if there were more of these opponents, what strangely focused reasons these are for a union's objections to a film that investigates the harsh treatment of union members—and that also memorializes the very founding of the UAW in Flint after the great sitdown strike of 1937. We even get a glimpse of the historical marker outside a GM plant commemorating the strike. Can there be other motives for the UAW's objections to *Roger & Me*?

Some speculations. Millions more will see this film than ever read UAW broadsides, millions in the car-buying public. By now the UAW is chained willy-nilly to the American auto industry and may feel that, in the clutch, it must support that industry even when it treats workers ruthlessly, even when leaders of that industry have been egregiously myopic. Those leaders were notoriously slow in responding to the foreign-car invasion, which was successful because of foreign-car design and quality. How many millions of American cars have been recalled by their makers in recent years? How many hundreds of thousands even since *Roger & Me* was released?

Yet the UAW is shackled to those American leaders, men whose dimwittedness is now a commonplace subject in business columns. In *New York* of February 12, Christopher Byron writes of GM and another giant, IBM, that after a decade in which they invested $100 billion, "they have little to show for it except ordinary products, weakening stock prices, and a litany of excuses for having missed out on the longest and strongest economic expansion in the history of American business." Byron adds that "last month, two of the largest institutional investors in the country . . . independently wrote letters to GM's board members complaining about managerial drift under [Roger] Smith"—the GM chairman of the film's title.

But what can the UAW do? Relocate in Sweden or Germany or France or Italy or—dread word—Japan? (A sign in Flint reads, "Buy American or ask for Japanese welfare." Much more defeatist than protectionist.) The union, broadsides or no, is absolutely laced to GM management for good or ill, and lately management's stupidities have made it more ill than good. *Roger & Me*, occasionally heavy-handed though it is, brings those stupidities to widespread attention—and could conceivably increase the public's interest in foreign cars. So, a bit pathetically, the union tries to dissuade the public from seeing the film.

Somewhere in the busy groves of Academe, a graduate film student is writing a dissertation about cop-partner films. Probably more than one student. Probably sociology and American studies students as well. I can't remember exactly when the flood of such films began—maybe around the time that "Car 54" was a TV hit—but the flood continues to swell. In the last several months alone: *Lethal Weapon 2*, *Tango and Cash*, *Internal Affairs*, and now **Loose Cannons** (Tri-Star). (There was even a French example recently with Philippe Noiret as one of the Paris detectives.)

No wonder the Western is dead. The received wisdom about the Western is

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Cinema Paradiso. *A Sicilian town—its warmth, fantasies, loves, and frustrations encapsulated in a film theater. The protagonist is a screen-struck boy who becomes a screen-struck man. Very pleasant. (Reviewed 2/19/90)* **Flashback.** *A patchwork plot doesn't much impede this comedy about a straight-laced young FBI agent and the wild '60s radical he is taking to jail. Adventures en route. Also some sharp digs at latter-day complacencies. (2/19/90)* **Glory.** *Edward Zwick shows unexpected strength as director in this unusually stirring account of a black regiment that fought under a white colonel in the Union Army. Except for Matthew Broderick as the colonel, this historical re-creation is fine. (1/8&15/90)* **Mama, There's a Man in Your Bed.** *Title notwithstanding, this French comedy about a Parisian CEO and the black woman who cleans his office is a quality bonbon. (3/5/90)* **—SK**

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that American space provided a theater for simplified moral drama where, long after the West itself had changed, we could still relish contests of patent good and evil with liberty and gunplay for all. But what is space compared with crowdedness? What is *High Noon* compared with high tech? What are the six-shooter and carbine compared with the automatic and Uzi? What are gallops across vast mesas compared with car chases through city streets (with no bystander ever getting hurt)?

The last significant Western was Sam Peckinpah's *The Wild Bunch* (1969), which—knowingly or not on Peckinpah's part—transformed the genre with Artaudian elements, with cruelty as purgation. The film was both primal and sophisticated, and with it, the Western seemed to have finished its function as moral gymnasium. *The Wild Bunch* was not literally the last Western, of course, but it might as well have been.

The city, broiling and brawling, drug-ridden and racially turbulent, was ready and impatient—the right setting for this new involuted violence. The cop partners in their coupe vroomed in to replace the cowboy and his sidekick at a more knowing, more crime-creased moral level. Gary Cooper goodness was out of place in the squad car: cops accept a certain amount of fraying of ideals as part of the territory. Yet the cop picture fulfills the same basic need as the Western; it allows the good guys (and us) to kill—to kill a lot—and to feel righteous about it, doing our duty to society while eliminating some of its members.

So avidly has the public responded, so plentiful has the supply been, that by now we can almost feel compassion for the writers of these screenplays. When a new cop-partner picture comes along, we wonder what they are going to do this time to provide at least a veneer of novelty. *Lethal Weapon*, both 1 and 2, have taken good care of the black-and-white combination. *Internal Affairs* pairs a white hetero male and a white lesbian, *Tango and Cash* I haven't seen, and *Loose Cannons* pants after *bizarrerie*. Gene Hackman plays a tough detective who, to cheer up his pal, quotes Dylan Thomas and who, in a jam, pulls out a muzzle-loading blunderbuss. His partner, Dan Aykroyd, has been a mental patient for a while, and when things get rough, he fragments into various well-known pop characters. That's enough about *Loose Cannons*.

A word to those busy dissertators. Watch those comments about violence being specific to the soul of America. Like Westerns before them, the cop-partner pictures are popular throughout the civilized world. Especially the civilized world. •

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What are the facts?

■ Israel is still paying for all the wars forced upon it since its birth. Out of an annual budget of about $20 billion, more than one-third, about $7 billion, is for repaying and servicing of that debt and $5 billion goes for defense. That leaves just $8 billion to run all other services of the country. In making peace with Egypt and returning the Sinai, Israel gave up the oil fields it had developed, which yielded an annual income of over $2 billion and which made Israel independent of oil imports. Israel also gave up the enormous investment in some of the world's most advanced and sophisticated military bases, and the cities of Yamit and Ofira.

■ All of these sacrifices did indeed create a major economic crisis, which resulted in inflation, unemployment and stagnation. But for the last three years, Israel has put into effect wide-ranging recovery plans, leading to economic stability and renewed growth. The results of these plans have exceeded even most optimistic expectations: Inflation was beaten without causing recession, unemployment declined, the budget deficit was reduced to 4% of GNP, and the Bank of Israel's foreign reserves almost doubled.

■ The energy and resourcefulness that has enabled Israel to absorb over 2 million immigrants and to convert a desolate land into one of green fields and modern cities are also reflected in Israel's economic development. Israel is a modern industrial state, whose output encompasses some of the most advanced technology and sophisticated production in the world. Industry is concentrated in high-technology and high-added-value products. It is based primarily on domestic scientific and technological creativity and innovation.

■ Israel is a leader in the fields of medical electronics, military electronics, civilian and military aviation, agri-technology, telecommunications, computerized graphics, fine chemicals, solar energy, water desalinization, and computer hardware and software. Traditional industries include food processing, textiles and fabrics, furniture, fertilizers, rubber, plastic, and metal products. The highest growth rates are in those branches that require heavy R&D investment, advanced engineering and sophisticated production techniques.

■ Israel is the acknowledged world leader in the diamond industry. It produces over 80% of the world's output of small polished stones. Israel is also the developer and the world leader in the drip irrigation technology of agriculture. Israeli equipment and this technology are now being used with great success in the arid regions of the United States and in many developing so-called "third world" countries (some of which don't acknowledge the "existence" of Israel).

■ Domestic tranquility, a western legal system, the superb university network (centered on Hebrew University in Jerusalem and the Technion in Haifa), the full infrastructure in transport, communications, and utilities, but primarily its educated and motivated population make Israel attractive to foreign industry. They are also aware that the highest level of R&D work is performed in Israel and that it costs around 40% less than in the U.S. Such companies as IBM, Digital Equipment, Intel, National Semiconductor, Motorola and many others have established plants and design and engineering centers in the new industrial parks mushrooming around the country's academic institutions. Israel has a Free Trade Area agreement with both the E.E.C. and with the United States, the only country in the world whose goods have preferential tariff reductions and duty-free access to the two most important markets in the world.

Israel's economy is healthy, is vibrant and growing, and offers countless investment opportunities in industry, agriculture, real estate, tourism, commerce, mineral exploration and much more. This is a country that started totally from scratch, not much more than 40 years ago. It is almost totally devoid of raw materials, has poor soil, and scant water resources. Yet it has fought five major wars, has absorbed and settled over 2 million immigrants, and has created a formidable industrial/agricultural society. The emerging nations and "third world" countries should take Israel as their example. It is indeed a "light onto the nations."

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Birth in Venice

BY DAVID ROSAND

The Genius of Jacopo Bellini
The Complete Paintings and Drawings
by Colin Eisler

(Harry N. Abrams, 560 pp., $195)

Giovanni Bellini
by Rona Goffen

(Yale University Press, 347 pp., $60)

The Feast of the Gods:
Conservation, Examination, and Interpretation
by David Bull and Joyce Plesters

(National Gallery of Art, 106 pp., $15)

Ever since the Italian Renaissance named itself—the rebirth of the forms and the values of classical antiquity—Florence has claimed pride of place in that complex cultural and historical phenomenon, the dawn of a modern era. This has been especially true in the fine arts, where our vision has been shaped by a 16th- century art historian and biographer, Giorgio Vasari. He taught us to trace the deliberate progress of painting out of the dark Middle Ages: the heroic innovation of Giotto, its reaffirmation by Masaccio, the initiation of High Renaissance modernism by Leonardo, the grand culmination in Michelangelo. It is a progress we recognize and continue to celebrate. The pictorial Renaissance, especially as a triumphant representation of the human figure, has seemed to us an essentially Florentine achievement.

The special stature of Florentine painting, particularly in the fifteenth century, seemed to be confirmed by its intimate relationship to the new architecture of Brunelleschi, in which classical proportion replaced medieval form, the rational geometry of the semicircular arch indicting the incommensurability of the Gothic ogive. Indeed, Brunelleschi himself was credited with the invention of the new mathematical perspective that so transformed pictorial representation. And it was another Florentine, Leon Battista Alberti, who articulated the new system and disseminated it in the first modern treatise on the art of painting in 1435. Through geometry, as well as through an antique formal vocabulary, painting elevated itself beyond its medieval status as craft; no longer a merely mechanical operation, it was hailed as a liberal art. Thanks to the Florentines, painting could aspire to the level of philosophy and poetry: an expression of the mind. For the painter, as for the poet, the highest value was invention, which was the ability to conceive something new.

It has never been easy to accommodate alternative pictorial traditions into this proud vision of art historical progress—particularly Venice. Vasari himself was too perceptive a critic not to recognize, however grudgingly, the achievement of the Venetians, especially Titian. But the pioneers of Renaissance painting in quattrocento Venice, whatever their reputations in their own time, could only seem *retardataire* and provincial by Vasari's Tuscan standards. On the one hand, they could not measure up to the art of their contemporaries in Florence; on the other, since their style was considered dry and cramped, they could only serve as background and prelude to the grandeur of the sixteenth century in Venice itself. And, although we think we know better, we have permitted this view to color the account of Renaissance painting in our typical art history texts.

Renaissance painting in Venice was essentially the creation of a single family. Jacopo Bellini (c. 1395/99-c. 1470) and his sons Gentile (c. 1431-1507) and Giovanni (c. 1433-1516) dominated the world of Venetian painting for most of the fifteenth century, working as independent masters but also as a clan. This pattern of production, centered about a family workshop, distinguishes painting in Venice for nearly five centuries: Maestro Paolo da Venezia and his sons in the fourteenth century, the Vivarini and the Bellini in the fifteenth, the Vecellio family (Titian and his son Orazio), the Robusti (Tintoretto and his sons and daughter and, finally, a son-in-law), the Caliari (Paolo Veronese, his brother and sons), and the Da Ponte (Jacopo Bassano and his sons) in the sixteenth and early seventeenth century, the Tiepolo and the Guardi in the eighteenth.

The Venetian workshop—more consistently than the workshop in Florence or elsewhere in Italy—tended to be a family affair. Fathers taught sons, passing on to them the accumulated wisdom and (no less important) the working stock and utensils of the trade. Sustaining this medieval structure was a guild system, mandated and monitored by the government, that determined professional practice and controlled the economy of artistic production in Venice. The Venetian painters' guild was probably the oldest in Europe, and it continued to be an economic and social force until the fall of the republic in 1797.

This very conservative situation seemed increasingly anachronistic as painters elsewhere came to identify themselves with the academies of art that were replacing the guilds as central professional organizations, first in Florence and Rome and then throughout Europe. Venetian conservatism seemed systemically inhospitable to the new ideals of the Renaissance. How, after all, could a craft that was automatically passed on from father to son pretend to be a thing of the mind? How could the master of a workshop pretend to the status of inspired genius? Could true talent be taught, or was it innate? These issues did not go undebated.

The phenomenon of the Bellini family, of its collective and individual achievements, raises just such questions, and it is precisely in the context of that debate that we begin to appreciate the special richness of their art. By the mid-fifteenth century Jacopo, the founding father, brought to Venetian painting a new monumentality, a breadth of figural proportion and gravity of expression—the very qualities that distinguished the new Florentine painting from the linear grace and gilded surface decoration of the so-called International Style. He investigated the possibilities of the new perspective with a dedication worthy of a Florentine.

Much of Jacopo's production has been lost to us, especially the narrative murals on canvas that established the model for

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subsequent decorative cycles in the *scuole*, the religious confraternities of Venice—most famously by Gentile Bellini and by Carpaccio. We know his painting primarily through a few preserved panels representing the Madonna and Child, some fragments of polyptychs, one complete altarpiece, and a monumental Crucifix on canvas. This work is now accessible in Colin Eisler's new book, a beautifully produced, massive volume (it weighs eight pounds) that brings together everything known by and about Jacopo Bellini, and sets the artist in the spectacular context of Renaissance Venice.

Jacopo's art has come down to us, above all, in two albums of drawings, preserved in the British Museum and the Louvre. Together their nearly 300 drawings represent the largest extant graphic corpus by any artist of the early Renaissance. (One of the special virtues of Eisler's book is the quality of its illustrations; the pale leadpoint designs of the London album here gain new visibility through infrared photography, which reveals entirely new aspects of the drawings.) In the range of subjects that they explore and the compositional solutions that they present, these drawings attest to an extraordinary ambition and inventiveness. Indeed, the history of the books, their function and their appreciation, reflect the complex position of Jacopo himself as an artist. The albums may be considered a culmination of the long medieval tradition of pattern books, collections of finished models to be used in future production. And their descent from Jacopo through his widow to their son Gentile documents the mechanics of transmission of artistic capital in the workshop tradition.

But Jacopo's drawings are not quite models in that medieval sense; they represent less the records of established designs than a search for new ones. If the drawings in the Louvre album, on parchment, are finely rendered in pen—some possibly even reworked by his sons—those in the British Museum book, in leadpoint on paper, are more tentative, more open and probing in technique. As we survey the contents of these albums, we follow an artist exploring possibilities: experimenting with variations on a particular iconographic or compositional theme, testing the prospects of the new perspective construction, inventing architecture and sculpture, recording monuments of ancient art and classical inscriptions, observing animals, creating landscapes, designing spectacles. It turns out to be a Venetian artist, then, who affirms the new role of drawing as an exploratory medium, who most clearly exercises the invention that Florentines like Alberti were urging as the artist's highest achievement, the ability to find new things. Jacopo's albums appear as most eloquent documents of early Renaissance pictorial ambition.

They were evidently appreciated as such. Not only did they serve as sources of compositional ideas for Jacopo's sons, as well as for his son-in-law Andrea Mantegna, but they were prized well beyond the studio. When Gentile Bellini was sent to the Turkish sultan as ambassador-portraitist in 1479, he presented his host with one of his father's albums (the book now in the Louvre) as a gift. The gesture itself suggests the new value assigned to drawings, as records of artistic invention, of the creative mind at work. Eisler's book will help restore Jacopo—and Venice—to a secure place in our understanding of early Renaissance art.

It is Jacopo's younger son, however, who stands as the first true pictorial genius of the Venetian Renaissance. Giovanni Bellini is an artist whose full stature we have only sensed. It seems to elude us. We know him especially as the painter of images for private devotion and for public worship, the painter of close-ups of the Madonna and Child or the dead Christ and the designer of the sacred architecture of large altarpieces. And that commitment to religious imagery may make us hesitate to seek the Renaissance in this painter. Ruskin praised "the severe and religious work" of Giovanni and observed, sadly, that with him ended "the line of the sacred painters of Venice." And, with Vasari, conventional art history has tended to value Giovanni as the quattrocento master of the painters of a more modern world, Giorgione and Titian.

JACOPO BELLINI, *VISION OF ST. EUSTACE*, C. 1450 (THE LOUVRE)

The recent cleaning of *The Feast of the Gods* in the National Gallery of Art in Washington reminds us of just how venerable is that attitude. An unusual foray into pagan iconography for Bellini, this Ovidian scene represents with understated comic effect the imminent embarrassment of Priapus before the assembled tipsy Olympians; the passionate urge of this deity of generative power for the unsuspecting nymph Lotis will be interrupted by the clarion bray of the ass of Silenus and stand exposed to the inopportunely roused immortals. Now freed of a thick layer of discolored varnish, the colors of Bellini's painting glow with a glorious richness that fully matches the richness of pictorial incident that enlivens his composition.

Beyond just cleaning, however, this campaign of conservation has permitted an archaeology of the painting that traces its fascinating postnatal vicissitudes in new detail. (The National Gallery has done an intelligent job of presenting this story to the general public,

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not least in the conservation report by David Bull, head of painting conservation; with a welcome sense of educational responsibility, the gallery introduces the public to the material facts of an important Renaissance painting, to the ways in which they are studied, and to the kinds of information such investigation can reveal.) In 1514 the old Bellini signed his Ovidian picture, which was commissioned by Alfonso d'Este, duke of Ferrara, and destined for the so-called *camerino d'alabastro*. Within a few years it was part of a larger cycle of canvases in that very special room in the castle at Ferrara, including one by the court painter Dosso Dossi and three others by Titian. In such company Bellini's masterpiece must indeed have appeared dated, and it consequently suffered two campaigns of modernization.

First—this is one of the revelations of the recent conservation—Dosso evidently intervened, transforming Bellini's backdrop screen of trees into a more inflated landscape setting. And second, probably in 1529, Titian imposed upon Bellini's gathering of the gods (and Dosso's transformed background) his own more monumental landscape structure, thereby attuning his old master's picture to his own three. Interestingly, neither subsequent painter touched Bellini's figures. By their Olympian attributes, these otherwise rude mechanicals remain as testimony to the aged painter's participation, however ironically detached, in the *rinascimento dell'antichità*.

Titian himself was the chief informant of those sixteenth-century writers, including Vasari, to whom we owe our scant biographical knowledge of Giovanni Bellini. The successor took full advantage of the opportunity to confirm the logical progress of art history—which, in Venice, ran Bellini-Giorgione-Titian. By the power of his own painting, however, Bellini triumphs over such willful historicism.

He is, after all, the painter who took the art of painting in oil—the early Renaissance "invention" of Jan van Eyck in the Netherlands—to a new level, extending its luminosity to broader realms of earth and heaven. Applying colors in translucent glazes, darker tones over a brighter ground, Bellini created a light that seemed to emanate from the very depths of the picture itself. Light assumed an existence independent of the objects illuminated. "With these techniques," Millard Meiss wrote, ". . . the diffusion of light could become a major pictorial theme." No finer proof of this exists than the *Saint Francis* (c. 1475) in the Frick Collection in New York. It is a dialogue between the saint and the divine as light.

If Bellini found God in the light of nature, he also confirmed his presence in the luminous gloom of Venetian church interiors. In Bellini's monumental altarpieces, holy figures and saints set within an architectural space, we sense a major transposition of Florentine structural values: the clarity and the commensurability of mathematical perspective become subject to the penumbra of a different architecture, one founded on the Byzantine experience of the Church of San Marco. Although the basic forms may remain the same—columns, arches, domes—the rationality of Brunelleschian geometry, its clear linear articulation, is muted by the irrational glow of golden mosaics that dematerializes surface, and by a tonal envelope that obscures precision of contours. Before Bellini's great altarpieces—for San Giobbe, San Zaccaria, the Frari sacristy—we learn how to recognize divinity in the structures of men, to see in gilded mosaics the light of heaven. The painter emerges as a powerful guide to understanding.

An art history concerned with attribution, dating, stylistic influence, and iconography in the narrowest sense has hardly done justice to this art. The assumption of deeper meaning and its exploration in these pictures are what distinguish Rona Goffen's new study of Giovanni Bellini from previous monographs on the artist. Her sympathy with the painter is evident throughout this important book, and her sensitive readings of the imagery introduce us to a painter of real wisdom and high invention. Goffen demonstrates just how ambitious were those images of Madonna and Child that constituted the bread-and-butter production of Bellini's workshop, how resonant their stylistic range and allusiveness.

Bellini found in the motif of Madonna and Child a basic theme for inventive variation, as would Raphael. Once we become attuned to the relative parameters of the situation, we marvel at the constant inventiveness of his response to the challenge. Nor is this merely a game of purely formal variations; each inflection—of glance, gesture, pose, setting, or mood—conveys a shift in meaning. Bellini's are not Madonnas of casual humanity. They are informed, rather, by the terrible knowledge and the maternal responsibility that they bear, knowing the mortal fate that awaits the child they have brought into the world, knowing that the humanity they have conferred on the divine infant dooms him. No painter has handled this human dilemma with greater awareness of its full, tragic import. Goffen shows us just how Bellini transformed the conventional notion of the sacred image as portrait by recognizing the intimations of mortality inherent in the genre itself; what was implicit in the tradition of icons as portraits becomes fully realized.

For all the piety of his imagery, however, Bellini is no modest servant of the faith. He is not the painter of "dear Madonnas," as Browning had stigmatized Raphael. He proclaims himself, instead, proudly as painter. As his father had signed his monumental Crucifix on the cross itself, at the feet of the savior, so Giovanni signs his paintings with striking prominence, usually on a *cartellino*, a piece of paper painted with ostentatious illusionism, as though affixed to the surface. In one case, however, he allows the image itself to speak for and of him, the *Dead Christ supported by the Virgin Mary and St. John the Evangelist* (in the Brera in Milan). Adapting a Latin couplet from an elegy by Propertius, an inscription in clean classical lettering directly links piety and painting: HAEC FERE QVVM GEMITVS TVRGENTIA LVMINA PROMANT / BELLINI POTERAT FLERE IOANNIS OPVS ("As these swollen eyes truly evoke moans of lamentation, then was this work of Giovanni Bellini able to shed tears"). The weeping image testifies to the affective and mimetic force of Bellini's art.

Fully aware of its own power and its

Questions

I still remember when you first became
forgetful, how you said, "Sometimes I think I'm
coming down with—you know—what's the name
of that disease?" Everyone, at the time,
laughed at your joke, knowing your easy wit,
your agile brain. I told the story, too,
making the joke my own, believing it
couldn't touch me—until it laughed at you.
Now, when I ask about your children—grown
and gone long since—each Sunday phone call floats
beyond the edge of memory. Alone,
your spouse keeps past and future fixed in notes.
Alone, you almost get things right, but then
you ask for all the answers once again.

CATHY STERN

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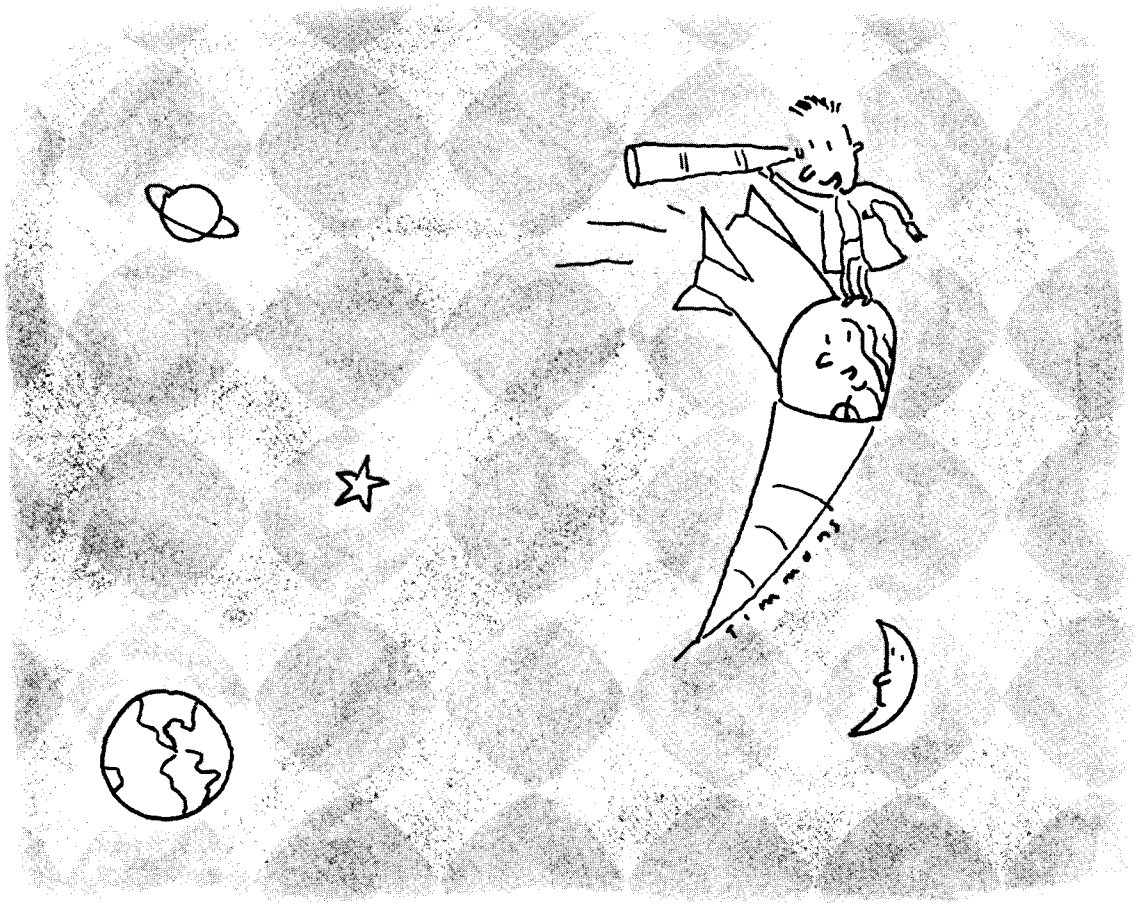

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worth, this is the art of a proud and free painter. Bellini was unwilling to subordinate his own values to the dictates of patrons. In refusing to paint a given subject for Isabella d'Este, he is described as rejecting programs that cramp his style, "being accustomed, as he says, to roam at will" in his art. It is the fantasy of the artist that must be allowed to explore possibilities, to invent new things. No other painter, not even Titian, articulated so well the ideals and the ambitions of the Renaissance artist. Giovanni fully realized the program so graphically outlined by his father.

DAVID ROSAND is professor of art history at Columbia University and author most recently of *Painting in Cinquecento Venice: Titian, Veronese, and Tintoretto* (Yale University Press).

The Brain in Spain

BY ROBERT BOYERS

The Imperative of Modernity: An Intellectual Biography of José Ortega y Gasset by Rockwell Gray

(University of California Press, 438 pp., $25)

For twenty years, roughly between the two world wars, José Ortega y Gasset was the most influential and esteemed writer in Spain. His works were translated, and he was highly regarded by a wide range of thinkers, from Huizinga to Heidegger to Camus. Though his influence in Spain rapidly declined after the Spanish Civil War, when he lived in exile for some years before returning to his country, Ortega retained a following in postwar Germany and in the United States, where he lectured to appreciative audiences in the late 1940s. Though his philosophical credentials were not universally respected, and his role as a modernizing intellectual in a backward country was not always understood, many readers took him to be an exemplary figure. *The Revolt of the Masses*, *The Modern Theme*, and *The Dehumanization of Art* were debated by American intellectuals long after they had ceased to be a force in Franco's Spain, and nobody interested in the vicissitudes of the Spanish soul could afford to overlook *Meditations on Quixote*.

It is astonishing, in other words, that there has been no standard biography. Rockwell Gray's book goes a long way toward filling that gap. Gray ably identifies the cultural and literary contexts, and provides a consistently instructive analysis of Ortega's major writings, considering throughout what Ortega offers as philosopher, man of letters, free-floating intellectual, exemplar of liberal culture, critic of mass man, and disenchanted spokesman for modernity. Along the way, his views are persuasively and colorfully differentiated from Heidegger's and Unamuno's, Sartre's and Kierkegaard's. It is now possible for those who have read Ortega only selectively and intermittently to consider him and his place in the intellectual history of his time more clearly, more responsibly.

Ortega was born in 1883, the son of a prominent journalist. His maternal grandfather was the owner of *El Imparcial*, an important liberal newspaper in Madrid. This background colored almost every aspect of Ortega's development. He continued to write for newspapers and magazines, to found and edit magazines and publishing houses, to address himself to a wide range of topical issues, almost to the end of his life. It was often said of him that he was more a journalist than a philosopher. And indeed, his more orthodox philosophical works are distinguished by polemical clarity and metaphoric brilliance. One feels that Ortega never quite overcame his affinity for impressionism and anecdote, for belles lettres and criticism. Though he received his doctorate in 1904, and long held a professorship in metaphysics, Ortega was acutely alert to the charge that he wrote too well to be a serious thinker. Whatever his sensibilities, the man who called himself a "cocky little fellow from Madrid who has been through Kant" insisted that the writer's business was "to speak effectively or, as the Greeks said, *eu legein*, to 'speak well.' "

A Spanish intellectual faced problems not generally faced by other European intellectuals. Many writers before Ortega had observed that Spain was a backward country, whose intellectuals were out of touch with the ideas that had swept the rest of the continent. Until quite recently, in fact, it was customary to compare Spain not to France or to Germany, but to Third World countries. Spanish writers were said to suffer an inferiority complex, to be torn between the desire to assert their independence of European models and the need to appropriate those models. Members of the generation that preceded Ortega's—the famous generation of 1898, which included Pio Baroja, Antonio Machado, and Miguel de Unamuno—were moved by Spain's loss of her last colonies to unleash a violent criticism of Spanish decadence. But aware as they were of Spain's enormous material and cultural deficiencies, finally they did not know how to deal with them. Ortega's early turn to literary and cultural journalism, to the conditions of his own time, was a consequence not only of his family background, but of a sense of cultural mission and a desire to do better than his predecessors.

The writers of the 1898 generation, noting the remoteness of Spain from modern ideas and skeptical about the quality of life in the great European cities, were tempted, in the words of the critic Angel Ganivet, to "abandon all sterile foreign commitments." Spain's problem—as many of them believed—was "national authenticity." Thus, as Gray nicely points out, the writer Azorin "gradually turned from youthful journalistic exposés of Spanish poverty and backwardness to an aesthetic savoring of the bewitching stasis to be found in the backwater corners of Spanish towns and distant Spanish history." Unamuno and others sought to identify a "quasi-mystical notion" of the essential Spanish spirit. Writers who had begun with cosmopolitan attachments were less and less inclined to draw on modern ideas of renewal. Their commitment to modernity never went beyond a desire to share with other Spaniards their religious doubts and their sense that major changes were taking place that they could not control. Their sense of philosophic vocation convinced them that ideas could affect social reality, but they were never moved to formulate political programs on the basis of their ideas, or to seek a role in public affairs.

Ortega had much in common with the older writers. Like them, he was a critic of the sterile bombast and the rhetorical posturing that disfigured Spanish prose. Though he generally resisted the argument for a unitary style or spirit as the key to all of Spanish history, he believed that contemporary intellectuals would

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have to come to terms with the myths and the disappointments of the Spanish past if they were to take control of the nation's future, to move it in directions that were commensurate with the character of its people. Ortega also joined with others in speaking of Spain's "decadence," surpassing his older colleagues principally in the vehemence of his denunciations. "The intellectual level is sinking so far and so rapidly at this point in our decadence," he wrote, "that shortly there will be neither academies nor theaters; rather we Spaniards will sit around enormous café tables and tell each other risqué stories."

But Ortega's thought was European and modern. If Spain was to enter the twentieth century, he insisted, its writers and its teachers would have to engage with dangerous and unfamiliar ideas. In place of a credulous reliance on the idols of the tribe, they would have to study the sciences. A system of lay education would have to take the place of the Catholic schools. People accustomed to thinking solely of personal salvation and individual improvement would be required to think of themselves as social beings, with responsibilities for the institutions and material conditions of their country.

Ortega's reformist zeal could yield little in the Spain of his day. Even before Franco took power in the late 1930s, Spanish legislators were slow to initiate sweeping political reforms, and Ortega was unwilling to join with leftist militants whose revolutionary aspirations seemed to him impracticable. Though many thoughtful people admired him, few saw in him a political leader who could mobilize popular support around particular programs. Of course he regarded his own proposals as eminently feasible, but he knew that old habits of thought were always slow to change, and in any case he could never fully reconcile his own deep feeling for the past with his sometimes uneasy conviction that a total break with tradition was required.

It is not hard to see why Ortega's influence in Spain declined rapidly during the long reign of Franco. Ortega's growing disillusionment with politics, his reluctance to involve himself with the left opposition to Franco, and his growing sense that in philosophy the "commitment" championed by the existentialists was usually more posture rather than substance: all contributed to the impression that Ortega had lost touch with the currents of his own day. Though he continued to write on important issues, his stubborn emphasis on the cleansing power of thought itself, and his refusal to accept the dark mood of much avant-garde European literature, made him seem old-fashioned. More important, students and younger professors in the Spanish universities, as Gray explains, "lived with a narrowly doctrinaire educational system, a strictly censored press, and a political vacuum, in which debate and criticism were unknown." Ortega's late emphasis on philosophy not as "a form of speaking to another, but of talking to oneself" could hardly stir in what remained of his readership the hope of imminent cultural renewal. The more Ortega felt his community withdraw from him, the more he turned toward the "dead philosophers" for companionship, and the more his contemporaries came in turn to regard even his greatest work as a mostly irrelevant communing with the shades of the past.

It is harder to see why Ortega should have lost his audience in Europe and the United States. In part, his eclipse was owed to his association with a culture that remained the most backward and ideologically reactionary in western Europe. More significantly, Ortega's strenuous disinterestedness, his willingness to entertain ideas without committing himself to them, was not a gift widely appreciated by those for whom Sartre or Marcuse were models of probity. Still, to regard Ortega only as a man of his moment, condemned by his origins to address elementary injunctions to a hopelessly unsophisticated audience, is to lose him, and to rob ourselves. There is much in Ortega's work that should commend him to us.

One of the most striking examples of Ortega's disinterestedness was his relation to modernist art. In 1925 he published two important essays, "Notes on the Novel" and "The Dehumanization of Art," whose object was to promote symbolism, cubism, surrealism, and the new non-representational arts in general. For Ortega, the most attractive thing about the new art was its resolute unpopularity, its refusal to pander to the tastes of those who expected vulgar consolation from art, and a recognizable relation to ordinary experience. Fearing the encroachments of mass culture, determined to nurture a European elite that would "learn their mission, which consists in being few and holding their own against the many," Ortega championed a vanguard art whose "successive styles contain an ever increasing dose of derision and disparagement." There were aspects of modernism that Ortega misunderstood, attributing to all of modernist art motives that more properly belonged only to the avant-garde. But his insistence that "an object of art is artistic only insofar as it is not real," that "preoccupation with the human content of the work is incompatible with aesthetic enjoyment proper," was important and influential.

At the same time, Ortega's brooding about "dehumanization," his sense that modernism was hardly an unmixed blessing, was unmistakable. However much Ortega wished to promote the modernist revolution, he could not but betray his misgivings. Gray ungenerously suggests, for this reason, that Ortega's defenses of modernism were chiefly concerned to uphold "his own role as a voice of the times." It is more likely that he wished to be "the disinterested chronicler" of innovations he feared and even detested. In any event, he regarded the modernist reliance on metaphor as a means of turning against natural things, against reality itself. Modernism pushed to an extreme limit the tendency of most art to abandon a "serious" relationship to life, to subordinate consequence to play or experiment, and as a consequence "the air feels lighter" in modernist works. Ortega's feeling of loss is hard to miss. In turning against the art of the past, modernism sought to renew culture, but Ortega was considerably more ambivalent than most other advanced thinkers of his day about the wisdom of an assault on established aesthetic conventions that saw the past mainly as an obstacle to be cleared out of the way.

Ortega developed his view of contemporaneity in many essays and books, but nowhere more cogently than in *The Modern Theme*. In that work of 1929, first published in English in 1931, he wrote:

> If the essence of each generation is a particular type of sensibility, an organic capacity for certain deeply rooted directions of thought, this means that each generation has its special vocation, its historical mission. It is under the strictest compulsion to develop those tiny seeds and to give the existence of its environment a form corresponding to the pattern of its own spontaneity. But generations, like individuals, sometimes fail in their vocation. . . . Instead of resolutely undertaking their appointed task they remain deaf to the urgent summons of the vocation that is really theirs and prefer a supine reliance on ideas, institutions, and pleasures created by their forebears.

Ortega believed that he could persuade Spanish and European intellectuals about the virtues of living at the "height" of one's time. His missionary fervor may seem a little dated, but his repudiation of outworn ideas and institutions was surely part of the familiar and widely approved modernist approach to the problems of culture. And we cannot but feel, even now, that Ortega really was

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on to something: to urge people in the direction of the most fresh and the most provocative was to urge them toward risk and growth. In Ortega's setting, it required considerable courage.

Gray suggests that for Ortega's generation the philosophical imperative was "the task of overcoming the inherited dichotomy between devitalized rationalism and a mindless vitalism." Like others before him, Ortega tried to formulate a "vital reason" that would save an essential human faculty from the philosophical and political abuses to which reason had been subjected. But for Ortega, the abstract philosophical imperative was supremely addressed not to the isolated thinker, but to an entire generation; his late emphasis on the necessary isolation of the philosopher was never persuasively argued.

Ortega rejected what he called "the fictitious and abstract point of view," as he rejected the "ridiculous conception" of a reality "which remained the same from whatever point of view it was observed." To live at the height of one's time entailed a willingness to study reality through the partial, "definite," competing "perspectives" underwritten by particular thinkers or systems. To know the past was to understand that ideas came from specific circumstances, that a thought debated in ancient Greece could never have the same force or meaning in twentieth-century Madrid or Heidelberg.

Ortega's injunctions to his contemporaries to dispense with easy oppositions between right and left, between tradition and innovation, were part of his campaign to raise them to the height of the time. To refuse to come up to the height of one's time, to take account of what was fresh and unfamiliar, was to fall prey to "the sole false perspective," namely, "that which claims to be the only one there is." The pure rationalist, like the resolute provincial or blind traditionalist, believes that the privileged perspective furnished to him by his reason alone (or by the authority of his class or his culture) has put him in touch with the only truth. Such a denial of what Ortega took to be the laws of perspective made impossible the acquisition of knowledge:

> Integral truth is only obtained by linking up what I see with what my neighbor sees, and so on successively . . . this sum of individual perspectives . . . , this omniscience, this true "absolute reason," is the sublime faculty which used to be attributed to God. . . . God is the symbol of the vital torrent through whose infinite nets the universe gradually passes, being thus continuously steeped in and consecrated by life.

The divergences between competing views, Ortega argued, did "not involve the falsity of one of them. On the contrary, precisely because what each one sees is a reality, not a fiction, its aspect must be distinct from what the other perceives. The divergence is not a contradiction, but a complement." Ortega's formulations supported a democratic enthusiasm: all who were willing to participate in the adventure of learning and striving and sharing in one another's discoveries were invited to join in the pursuit of knowledge. His epistemological pluralism was the view of a liberal.

But pluralism was not relativism. Indeed, in Ortega's case, it was unexpectedly married to elitism. Ortega was impatient with those who refused to come up to the height of the time as he understood it. When he lectured in Buenos Aires, where he lived for a number of years after his flight from Madrid in 1936, he often complained that Latin American writers were "so little aware of things and so audacious in speaking of them" that he could only wonder at their presumption. But many intellectuals in Ortega's adopted home believed that the urgency he felt about bringing people up to a "level" was only the measure of his own insecurity as a Spanish "provincial" eager to succeed with a wider European audience. What made him think, these critics wondered angrily, that Buenos Aires would be precisely as hospitable to "the height of the times" as Madrid?

Gray's biography is especially good at uncovering such contradictions in Ortega's thought, including his readiness to judge alien cultures on the basis of little more than intuition. Anyone committed to staying abreast of things runs the danger of becoming, as Gray notes, "a dilettantish purveyor of novelties." Gray concludes that Ortega's "highly developed taste, his philosophical training, and his exceptional literary talent saved him." Still, the charges of parochialism and presumption linger in his account.

But a different balance may be struck. For if, as Gray rightly says, the proponents of advanced consciousness are often "too certain of the centrality of the cultural values they affirm," they are also justified in believing that the alternative to their initiatives may well be a blithe cultural pluralism that prides itself on valuing all things equally. During his brief tenure in 1931-32 as a deputy to the Spanish Constituent Cortes, or Congress, Ortega delivered a number of speeches that demonstrated the wise

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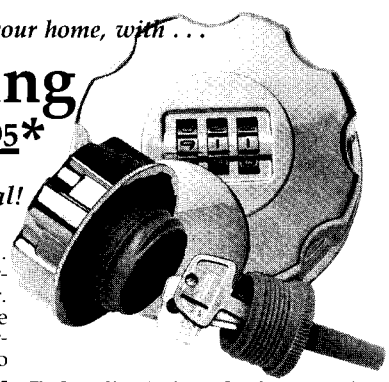

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deployment of his central concepts.

Consider Ortega's position on supposed adjustments in the relationship between church and state. Committed though he was to helping Spain plan for a modern industrial economy, and to liberating the country from the control of the clerics and the provincial power brokers, Ortega clearly appreciated that the past remained a pervasive factor in Spanish life. To attempt to banish it by edict, in the name of a modernity that was little appreciated by most Spaniards, would threaten even the changes that had already taken place. Ortega, in other words, took care to define the level of his time in Spain not solely from the perspective of a secular intellectual like himself, but also in terms that might seem acceptable to other more or less enlightened persons in his society. As Gray records it, "Though Ortega had made quite clear his support of a lay state, he censured the Assembly for what he considered its naive decision to write specific legislation against the Church . . . , which suspended the state budget for clerical salaries after two years; forbade the religious orders to teach in parochial schools," and so on. Ortega was, culturally, as much a realist as a visionary.

How could a relentless critic of his own society, someone who inveighed against the provincialism of his society and regarded himself as a European intellectual, attack the liberals in the Cortes? The answer is that the older Ortega grew, the better he saw that human beings do not solve their problems without some recourse to the past, to traditions and to attachments. His occasional tendency to believe in a "European" identity, in a life without "living ghosts" from one's heritage, was routinely chastened by a sense of rootedness and constraint. In fact, Ortega achieved his greatest fame as a critic not of tradition, but of the very modernity he championed.

With the publication in 1930 of *The Revolt of the Masses*, Ortega offered an analysis that had more to do with conditions in Paris and London than in Madrid. However much people in his own country clung to bankrupt ideas and practices, on the continent people were distancing themselves as quickly as possible from inherited models and constraints. And in the vanguard of those who were beating a path toward an unprecedented, radical contemporaneity were the new mass men. These were not the proletarian masses invoked by Marx and Engels but the ascendant middle-class managers, the professionals and civil servants who formed the backbone of modern societies. These mass men, these "barbarians," were the target of Ortega's powerful work; and in focusing on them he was joining a tide of inquiry that included the work of Julian Benda, Karl Mannheim, T. S. Eliot, and Paul Valery.

The real crisis, Ortega had come to believe, was not the reliance on tradition, which was rapidly coming to seem anachronistic even in Madrid, but the newly influential belief that norms and principles of any kind were obstacles to the proper development of humanity. The mass man was dismissive of standards and sneered at questions of quality. For him, no one could be superior to anyone else. To be modern meant not to be unduly impressed by anything. Technique and efficiency were the key words in the new vocabulary of success.

Ortega readily conceded that "average existence today takes place on a higher level or altitude than it did in the past," yet many people felt that they lived in an era of decline. Though "it is a time," Ortega wrote, "which feels itself superior to all known times," men and women throughout Europe were less certain than ever before about the future, and were without the means to retrieve their bearings by measuring themselves against the past. The modern societies that were encouraged to think for themselves and to ignore the past were increasingly distressed by the arbitrariness and emptiness of their choices. "Soon," Ortega feared, "a cry will go up from around the planet . . . crying for someone or something to take command and impose a mission."

Ortega subsequently had telling things to say about the totalitarian movements in Europe, but it was not principally a fear of a führer that exercised him in *The Revolt of the Masses*. He feared, rather, the weightlessness of the mass man, his ability to float "on the slightest breeze," his lack of seriousness, the absence of a resistance to "ephemeral whirlwinds which blow up in the world of art or ideas, or in politics or social customs." Ortega was moved to fear and astonishment by the spectacle of the average man liberated from all sense of limitation and encouraged to pronounce judgment on everything under the sun. "There is no public question," Ortega complained, "in which he, stone-deaf and blind as he is, does not intervene and impose his 'opinion.'" To applaud what had long seemed the goal of liberal hope was to forget that ideas and opinion are largely worthless where there are neither norms nor standards by which to evaluate them. Under such circumstances, Ortega believed, one could legitimately speak of the death of culture.

Ortega was certainly aware that his arguments here would seem to align him with the worst of the reactionaries. He would be accused of harboring a fondness for aristocracy and hierarchy, would be derided for recoiling with effete distaste from democratic possibility. Even Gray writes of "the pseudoaristocratic taste implicit in Ortega's almost visceral discomfort," as if only a retrograde, dandified intellectual would allow himself to feel "visceral discomfort" in the face of the developments to which Ortega responded. Gray is surely right to claim that, though Ortega attacked mainly the opinionated middle-class philistine and the soulless technicians, he had in mind also the increasingly empowered poor and uneducated. But no reader of Ortega can believe that he sought a restoration of the old class distinctions, or would have repealed anyone's right to education, free expression, or legal protection. An important footnote in *The Revolt* sharply declares what it was that so stirred Ortega:

> The paucity of intellectual life, that is, of cultivation or disciplined exercise of the intellect, is made manifest, not by greater or lesser knowledge, but rather by the habitual lack of care in adjusting to the truth, a habit so often displayed by intellectuals. It is not a matter of being right or not, of judging correctly—the attainment of truth is not in our hands—but of the lack of scruple and care to abide by the elementary requirements of sitting in judgment at all.

Does such a passage tell us anything we need to know about Ortega's age, or our own? I think so. *The Revolt of the Masses* was not only shrewd about conditions in 1930, it was prophetic about the coming of attitudes that threaten the quality of life in the advanced democracies. Surely one could warn against the new "barbarians" without forgetting that ignorance and provinciality were still greater dangers. Whatever his misgivings about modernity, Ortega knew that there was no way but forward. He demanded only the constant check provided by a deep feeling for the past. Gray's biography recommends that we consider again, or for the first time, the staying power of Ortega's thought. He may not have been the philosopher that his earlier readers thought they needed, but his work may yet prove indispensable to those for whom this century has been a darker time than the more intoxicated celebrants of modernity will allow.

ROBERT BOYERS is editor of *Salmagundi* and professor of English at Skidmore College.

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Bad Boys and Bolsheviks

BY DONALD FANGER

Astrophobia
by Sasha Sokolov
translated by Michael Henry Heim

(Grove Weidenfeld, 385 pp., $21.50)

In 1975 Sasha Sokolov, the thirty-two-year-old son of a Soviet diplomat, immigrated to the West after finishing journalism school and working for a time as gamekeeper on a hunting preserve for high Party officials. The short novel he brought with him, *A School for Fools*, was promptly published in Russian (1976) and English (1977) by the enterprising house of Ardis of Ann Arbor, Michigan, and hailed by Nabokov as "an enchanting, tragic, and touching work." The majority of reviewers followed suit, praising the singular lyrical power with which the book renders the inner world of its narrator, a schizophrenic boy at a special school for the impaired, and welcoming the appearance of a new and distinctive voice in contemporary Russian letters.

Sokolov's second novel appeared in 1980, also under the Ardis imprint, but only in Russian. Its title translates as *Between Dog and Wolf*, a phrase that suggests twilight indeterminacies in several senses, as well as referring literally to the central episode of a formidably dense and idiosyncratic text about life and death in the timeless Russian hinterland. Both books qualify as novels only because no better label is available. Reading them, you get the impression that paragraphs and pages, indeed whole sections, might be shuffled without appreciably altering the effect of the whole. Forever circling back on itself and changing levels without warning, narrative movement—to the extent that it can be spoken of—is fueled by the sounds and associations of a language that, far from being simply a medium, constitutes the central preoccupation and value of this strangely hypnotic writing.

Sokolov clearly has no use for the staples of conventional fiction. In articles and interviews he has proclaimed his lack of interest in plot ("A loves B, B loves C, C loves D—how tiresome!") and by extension, in examining the patterns and motives of human behavior. Historicism of any kind is similarly rejected out of hand: "The writer doesn't need history; it is senseless. Why should I waste my time on it? I want to be read; apart from that, it is life in the present that interests me: flowers, a waterfall—what has history got to do with these things and why should I be poking around in graves?" Sokolov's attitude toward the present as history is the same: "I don't need newspapers or news. . . . I write out of myself. . . . I live in literature, and the rest has little interest for me." What commands his allegiance above all is "the primordial word, a value in itself." He lives in language, he has said, to such an extent that it is less a means of expression for him than "a habitation." His announced goal is "to haul Russian prose up to the level of poetry."

Astrophobia, though it circles like the earlier books around the themes of time, love, sex, and death—and though it, too, is a sustained stylistic tour de force—differs from them at least as much as they differ from each other. In Russian it is called quaintly *Palisandria*, or The Epic of Palisander—and it contains (if it doesn't quite tell) the story of the rise to power of the title character, "the Orphan of the Kremlin," a member of the mysterious and hereditary Order of Watchmen, which has ruled Russia at least since (and probably long before) "the October Perturbation." What we read are Palisander's notes, completed in the year 2044 for the use of a future biographer whose preface (dated A.D. 2757) gives the general flavor of the book:

> Great-nephew of Stalin's comrade-in-arms Lavrenty Beria, grandson of the distinguished Siberian philanderer Grigory Rasputin (who, by gaining the affection of the last Russian empress, shook the throne to its very foundations), and author of the memoirs here offered to the reader, Palisander Dahlberg (19__-20__) traversed a glorious road, Napoleonic in scope, from simple Kremlin orphan and steward of the Government Massage Parlor to head of state and commander of the powers that were. The seven centuries dividing us from the memoirist's demise have diminished neither the historical significance of his immense stature nor the ideological and artist merits of his seminal works. Indeed, they stand today as perma-

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nent spiritual treasures of the so-called Age of Transition. None of his books is any less than precious to us, but this one is infinitely more precious than the rest. Wholly succumbing to the fever of confession, Dahlberg races from first line to last; his pen never stops for mere convention. Meticulously reconstructed fragments from the private lives of the ruling oligarchy—especially sketches of the debauchment of prominent Kremlin wives; descriptions of suicides, assassination attempts, and executions; notes of travels, puerile pranks, and geriatric prostitution—all this and more make his memoirs impossible to put down.

After a prologue describing the suicide of "Uncle Lavrenty" Beria, whose hanging himself from the Kremlin's Salvation Tower clock initiates an Age of Transition that ends only in 1999 with Palisander's accession to leadership, the story proper begins with "The Book of Exile," the first of four long chapters. It describes Palisander's term as steward of the Government Massage Parlor that has been set up in the Novodevichii (here called "The New Virgin") Convent—a punishment for his role in the innocent boyish prank that causes the death of "Uncle Joseph" Stalin, who had been one of the council of guardians, along with Khrushchev, Brezhnev, and Andropov, in charge of bringing up the young hero.

Here Palisander is given a doctored newspaper announcing Beria's death and, coincidentally, the desire of an elderly aristocratic couple (the Grand Duchess Anastasia and her husband) in the Duchy of Belvedere to adopt a grandson and heir. Soon afterward Andropov drops in on Palisander to explain that Russia is actually ruled "by Certain Powers which maintain their head lodge outside our borders"—in Belvedere. Beria had tried to oppose them and been driven to suicide as a result. Palisander's interest in being adopted by the old couple offers a chance to learn something about Russia's mysterious foreign rulers.

To give him credentials in Belvedere, Andropov suggests that he assassinate Brezhnev. The attempt is made, but it is a wax effigy that Palisander shoots. No matter; he is incarcerated luxuriously at Arkhangelskoe, former estate of the aristocratic Yusupovs (one of whom in fact killed Rasputin), which has been turned into "a penitentiary for the privileged." Released through the intervention of admirers (but only after he has taken revenge on Brezhnev by debauching his wife), Palisander travels by balloon to Belvedere, there to discover that Anastasia and her husband are long dead, and that Andropov his tricked him, revoking his citizenship and himself assuming the leadership of Russia.

Palisander has always avoided mirrors. Now one traumatizes him by revealing that he is an old man. Worse is to come. Forcible examination by the local doctor, Carl Gustav Jung, reveals that Palisander is a hermaphrodite. He is raped by the incestuous couple who run the old Romanov estate; escapes from sadomasochistic servitude to become a bisexual prostitute in Paris; joins Prostitutes Peripatetic and travels the world; becomes a best-selling author, wins a Nobel Prize for literature; and uses his new wealth to collect the remains of "every Russian ever to die outside the Motherland"—which he brings home to Russia when, at length, he is called back to take power.

So much for the cartoon-like, quasi-memoiristic, quasi-historical skeleton ofthe book—which is, in addition, quasi-picaresque, quasi-sci-fi, quasi-porn. Sokolov has taken aim at this series of targets—prime forms, as he calls them in an interview, of current Russian writing—and attached them to the quasi-epic career of his quasi-mythological, hairless, seven-fingered protagonist (whom we follow here in only the latest of a series of incarnations).

Sokolov has identified his chosen weapon as parody, and the book does in fact contain brilliant parodic passages. But the rationale of parody becomes so broad or so obscure so much of the time that travesty seems a more appropriate term. Here, for example, is the lowdown on Stalin's marriage and Trotsky's death:

> Joseph [Stalin] met Nadezhda [Allilueva] while she was a *figurante* in the Imperial Variétés. They became friends and, finding their characters compatible, decided on a church wedding. But they ran up against an unforeseen obstacle: church weddings were opposed by the Trotskyists, not only in general but in particular. Reluctant to feed the ranks of political rumormongers, they had a secret wedding and found some excuse or other to exile Trotsky to Uruguay, where he quietly succumbed to a tarantula bite. The marriage turned out to be enviably blissful.

Palisander's uncles are the sort that might be found in anybody's family—Stalin, benevolent and naive; Khrushchev, a dimwitted graphologist; Brezhnev, "a mild-mannered official who had begun life as a lowly doorman, a simple, straightforward sort of chap when you got to know him." As for Andropov:

> After a disturbed childhood in Mordovia, Andropov had sung and danced with a special Gypsy detachment. A first-rate guitarist, he had hobnobbed with such musical personalities as Vertinsky and Leshchenko and was on a first-name basis with Feodor (Chaliapin), Vera (Kholodnaya), and Isadora (Duncan). With the breakup of his unsuccessful marriage to Kandinsky's sister (she left him for Le Corbusier), he was promoted—at the intervention of Molotov's wife Polina (Zhemchuzhina)—to the position of orderly to my great-grand-uncle.
>
> The world of the stage, legitimate and otherwise, has supplied the Kremlin with numerous luminaries. How many people know that Katya Furtseva, a Petipa protégée and future Minister of Culture, began her career as a cancan dancer, or that Yasha Sverdlov, later a Hero of the Revolution, was famous in his native Urals as a tightrope walker and bareback rider; or that longtime Politburo notable Stasya Mikoyan was once known for running public séances; or that "Doctor's-Plot" Zhdanov worked his way up from apprentice croupier in the gaming houses of Mariupol?

Thus is history defamiliarized and domesticated, the Kremlin pastoralized, several generations of Soviet leaders turned into good-enough-natured bumblers, and communism as word and fact banished from these pages (through which hundreds of names pass like comets, from Agrippa to Pia Zadora). All is elevated to zany comic opera, whence it tumbles into grotesquerie—most notably in the treatment of sex.

Palisander couples heroically from the age of eight onward—but only with old women. (At one point he notes of his "mass gerontdebauchery" that "the number of grannies who had offered me their all now exceeded the thousand mark.") The great love of his life, however, remains the legless Shaganeh, Madame Superior of the Government Massage Parlor at the New Virgin Convent and former wife of Khomeini:

> Tirelessly, relentlessly, we came to know each other. We were quite different—a strapping Russian lad and a petite middle-aged dowager of Ottoman extraction—but there were things that brought us together. She found much in me that struck her fancy: my voice, my looks, my superabundant passion, my pajama pattern, the dimensions of my alter ego, which for the length of my visit plied the object of its delight with multifarious attentions. . . . I for my part was much taken by her years, by the unhealthy crimson in her cheeks, her bony hook of a nose, the faded, spotty nap of her pubis, her distended stomach and long, drooping breasts with their bluish, pimply, thimble-like nipples that suckled me as the she-wolf suckled the Tiberian twins. But there is one feature I cannot praise enough: her sheath. Never had I known a sheath so blissfully spacious.

Never in Russian writing has sex been at once so cheerful, so explicit, and so unsavory. The pinnacle of outrageously bad taste is reached in the description of Pali-

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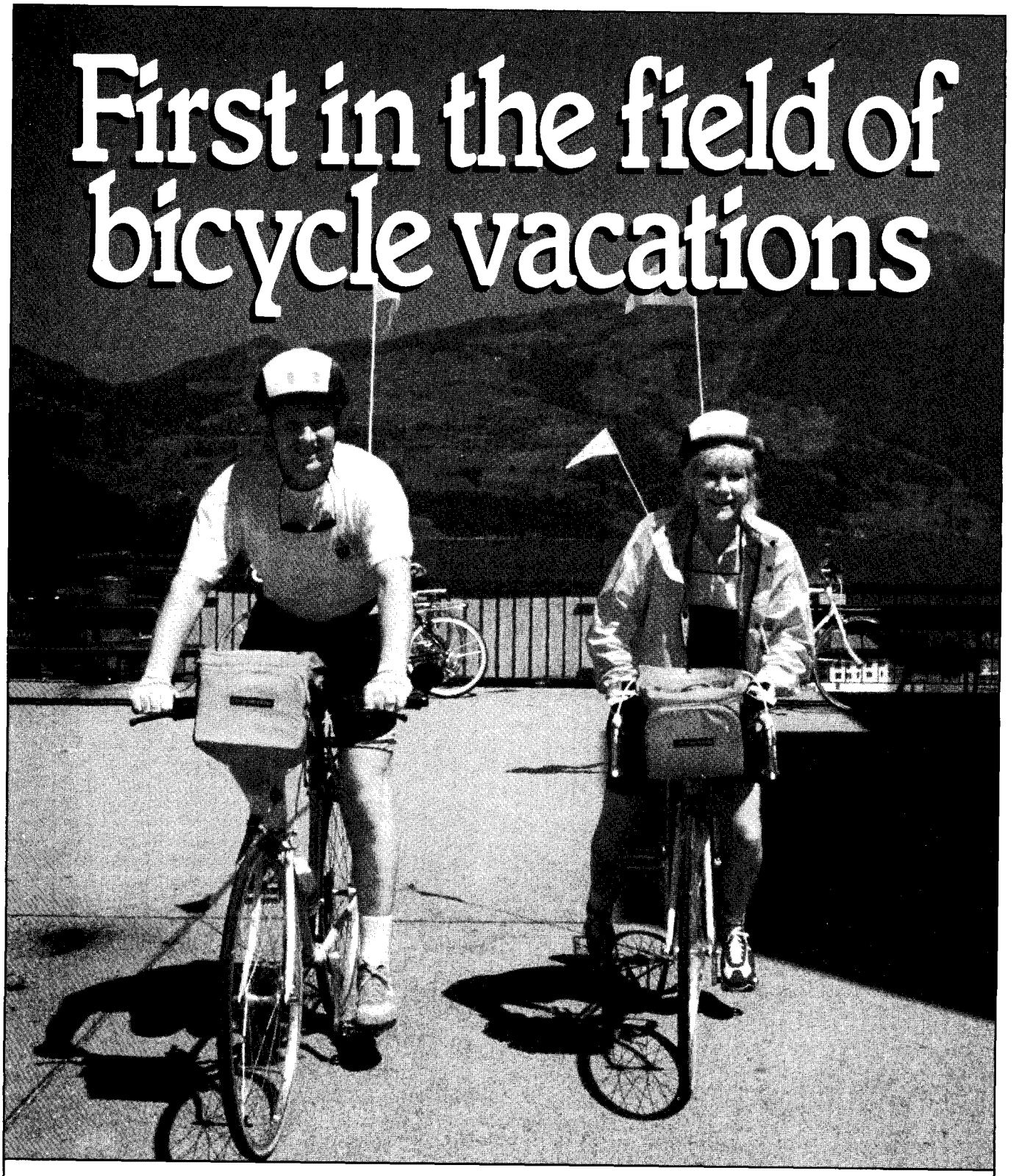

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sander's vindictive bedding of Victoria Petrovna, wife of Brezhnev and illegitimate daughter of Prince Yusupov, the assassin of Palisander's grandfather, Rasputin:

> I poured her over the bedstead like a potful of noodles over a colander. Then I kneaded and molded, molded and kneaded, my hands sinking up to the wrists in her abundant, aspic-like charms. . . .
>
> She smiled. She had the teeth of a horse. . . .
>
> Slowly, making a show of reluctance, she rose on her back and opened her thighs until at last there it was in all its glory: dark, moist, and mute, adorned with gray curls—to put it as genteelly as possible—her interjection, her O.

The author would probably welcome the charge (which he so patently invites) that his book is tasteless, perhaps also that it is pointless, for it is clear that he is out to challenge the suppositions on which such charges rest. "Tasteless" could mean simply jejune or, in passages like the one just quoted, morally offensive—I have in mind not the anaphrodisiac explicitness, which some may find (as I do) perversely charming, but its gratuitous application to a recognizable (and in this case living) historical personage. "Pointless" hardly needs a gloss; it means intellectually vacuous. Why, Sokolov appears to be asking, should moral or intellectual yardsticks be applied to works of art? Is it not enough to produce—as one critic has termed this potpourri of literary stylizations and allusions—"a verbal miracle"?

This stance, to be sure, has antecedents in recent and not-so-recent Russian writing, as do most of the key elements of *Astrophobia*. But there is no Russian book I can think of that it can seriously be said to resemble. By the same token, though there have been Russian writers who insisted on style as their principal value, none has come so close to regarding it as an exclusive one. What makes Sokolov incomparable is also what makes him exasperating—the fact that he is the most categorical, uncompromising, extreme aesthete in modern Russian literature. Considering how traditionally that literature has concerned itself with psychological, social, moral, historical, and philosophical issues, it may seem surprising that this iconoclast should have schooled himself in it so deeply and effectively. The mastery, however, involves more its instrumentations than its forms. Sokolov is a writer of virtuoso sentences, paragraphs, and passages. His books, as books, are mostly cadenza.

It is chiefly in this technical sense that we should understand Sokolov's claim that the real protagonist of his book is Russian literature. The point might even be extended. It could be argued that *Astrophobia* does in fact evince both an underlying sense of and a serious attitude toward history, and that both are to be found in the vitality of the language that Sokolov has partly reclaimed and partly reinvented, as classically decorous as the incidents are bizarre and unsettling. In such an interpretation the author's language would be seen as grounding his irresponsible treatment of the matters he travesties in a larger, strategic responsibility—to the act of writing as free creation.

How one comes down on this question may depend on the extent to which one identifies the sorts of readers likely to be discomfited by Sokolov's writing and rejoices at the discomfiture. Which is to say that the proclamation of a transcendent responsibility through provocation and prolixity (like the internationalization of cultural reference though all the loony lists of names that dot these pages) makes emblematic sense chiefly within the Russian tradition, where the battle against taboos is still being fought.

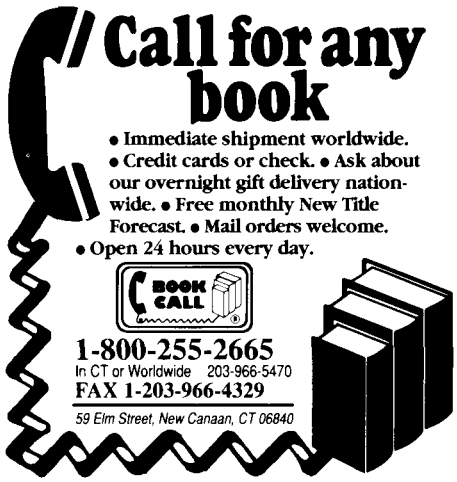
To readers of Burroughs and Barth and Sorrentino, not to mention Beckett and Nabokov, that battle is long since over; for them particularly, the pleasure of this text will have to center on the discrete felicities of Michael Henry Heim's heroic Englishing. One small example:

> Come to think of it, the Russian autumn has little to recommend it but a few late crops; it is otherwise all slosh and sadness. Woe unto him who is furry of tongue but not coat. For the rain it raineth every day.

The dust jacket of *Astrophobia* quotes Tatyana Tolstaya, one of the best of the newer Soviet writers, as stating that Sokolov, though read with enthusiasm in samizdat copies, is still unpublished there. That situation has already changed, and is about to change even more drastically, as Sokolov himself reported last September from Moscow, where he had been since June, giving interviews and readings, appearing on television, and signing contracts. *School for Fools* was published in the magazine *Oktiabr* in March 1988, and *Between Dog and Wolf* in the magazine *Volga* in August and September 1989. The new Ogonyok publishing house plans to bring them out together in a single volume in an edition of 250,000 copies.

As for *Astrophobia*, though the Ardis Russian-language edition was banned from display at the Moscow International Book Fair for the fair's first three days, it was subsequently allowed to be shown and has elicited considerable interest. A mainstream Soviet publishing house, Moskovskii Rabochii, has contracted to publish the first section ("The Book of Exile") in what is, by Soviet standards, a small edition of 50,000. Other publishers, Sokolov says, have expressed interest in bringing out the whole book. If by some unlikely miracle one of them were ever to do that, it would be a historic event, signaling unmistakably that the censorship of imaginative literature, at whatever level and on whatever grounds, had finally disappeared from the Soviet scene.

DONALD FANGER teaches Russian and comparative literature at Harvard University and is working on a book on 20th-century Russian literature.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The Business of Immortality

BY PAUL BERMAN

The Politics of Literary Reputation: The Making and Claiming of 'St. George' Orwell by John Rodden

(Oxford University Press, 448 pp., $27.50)

The writer who coined "Hate Week," "thought-crime," "Thought Police," "vaporize," "Newspeak," "doublespeak," "Some are more equal than others," and "Big Brother is Watching You" has sold, between *Animal Farm* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, more than 40 million books in sixty languages—which is, according to John Rodden, "more than any pair of books by a serious or popular postwar author." In early 1984, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* alone sold 50,000 copies a day. Nor do numbers even begin to suggest the scale of George Orwell's influence, which is so huge as to have lost—almost—all specific meaning. Not long ago Apple Computers ran an ad invoking Orwell to imply that IBM is slightly sinister. And the Einstein Moomjy carpet company had the wit to announce:

> WAR IS PEACE.
> FREEDOM IS SLAVERY.
> IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH.
> And our crisp new Sisal-like look in wool broadloom is $19.84 sq. yd.

The breadth of Orwell's attraction to intellectuals is positively weird. Rodden, who seems to have read every essay on Orwell ever written, sensibly concludes that among Orwell's leading champions, Irving Howe most closely resembles Orwell intellectually (perhaps along with George Woodcock, the Canadian biographer and essayist, who was Orwell's friend during a period when Orwell, back from Spain, hung around the London anarchists). More important, the controversial and slightly preposterous essay written a few years ago by Norman Podhoretz, "If Orwell Were Alive Today," which claimed him posthumously for neoconservatism, turns out to be a minor cliché of the modern era. Everyone, of every ideological stripe, believes that Orwell would have come around in the end.

Wyndham Lewis, who admired Hitler as late as 1938, wrote, incredibly: "Had Orwell been of German nationality who can doubt he would have been an S.S. man?" The very first full-length essay ever devoted to Orwell was written in 1939 by a pro-Franco Jesuit named father C. C. Martindale, under the title, "Why Not Our Ally?" Another Catholic writer, Christopher Hollis, wrote: "More and more I am convinced that it is as a theologian that Orwell will be considered important." Rodden has even dug up a Soviet author who regards Orwell as a friend of the Soviet camp and a foe of tyranny in . . . China. Has any other modern writer been assimilated to so many views—which is to say, has any other modern writer conquered the culture so thoroughly? Ours, it turns out, is the age of Orwell.

Rodden explains Orwell's reputation, and by extension all literary reputations, anthropologically. He invokes Edmond de Goncourt, who said: "A book never is a masterpiece. It becomes one." The meaning and the value of a work may be intrinsic. But the work's reputation, its fame, the esteem in which it is held—these are created by publishers, editors, reviewers, and generally by the powerhouses of the culture industry. Rodden, being a man of the moment, expresses this observation by means of a theoretical apparatus, partly derived from German "reception-theory" and with a nod to current canon-criticism, that brandishes terms like "loci of the momentous" (or important reviews) and "volcanic moments" (something bigger than reviews, like a TV movie). The theoretical apparatus sounds a little formidable, but like a dentist's roomful of equipment, it has the virtue of focusing on usefully tiny details.

The loci of the momentous in Orwell's case turn out to be favorable reviews and essays that appeared in the two years after his death in 1950. V. S. Pritchett, in a dozen small notices and an obituary, coined the notion of Orwell as the conscience of his generation, as well as the image of Orwell as a saint. Cyril Connolly called him a "revolutionary in love with 1910." Lionel Trilling, in the introduction in 1952 to the first American edition of *Homage to Catalonia*, called him (quoting Stephen Marcus) a "virtuous

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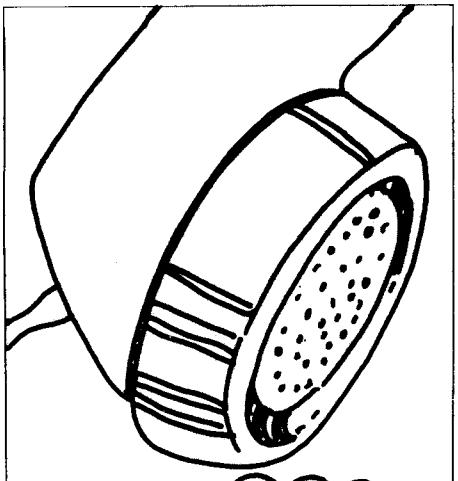

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man." And these early labels managed, as Rodden sees it, to engrave a series of "faces" that proved lasting: Orwell the Rebel, Orwell the Common Man, Orwell the Prophet, and Orwell the Saint (especially St. George the dragonslayer who saved England).

Next the "faces" were refined and put to factional use by an odd set of intellectual circles: the *London Tribune* group (Aneurin Bevin, Michael Foot, and others); the London Freedom group (Woodcock and other anarchists); the groups around the British Catholic journals (the right-wing *Tablet* and the *New Left Slant*); plus the *Partisan Review* group in the United States, followed by what Rodden describes as *PR*'s left and right offshoots at *Dissent* and *Commentary*. Obviously not everyone has viewed with equal enthusiasm an author who was called, by the authoritarian wing of British Marxism, the "Maggot of the Month." Anglo-American feminists have seen him, due to some disapproval of birth control and other opinions, as misogynistic. Yet the champions overwhelmed the detractors, and the more appealing of Orwell's "faces" loomed with sufficient clarity to be picked up by big-time cultural institutions such as Time-Life, the paperback houses, the school publishers, and the TV networks, who broadcast the "faces" to the world.

Some among these powerful cultural institutions applied Orwell principally to the political purpose of waging both the cold war, which he supported, and the war of conservatism against democratic socialism, which was a war that he opposed. Other institutions took him up without any politics at all. The organized junior and senior high school English teachers of America, appreciating his prose, canonized him as the Model Stylist, which guaranteed him an enormous circulation. (University English teachers, on the other hand, have never much liked him, possibly because, as Rodden slyly suggests, professors distrust intelligibility.) *Saga* magazine, appreciating the crags of Orwell's cheeks and nose, ran his portrait on the cover as a sort of Mr. Macho. And between them these several layers of the general culture, the high and the low, *Partisan Review* and the TV networks, the idealistic and the cynical, honest champions and right-wing exploiters, Einstein Moomjy and the junior high school teachers, the anarchists, the Jesuits, finally created "Orwell," the name that everyone knows—even if, for most people, the name means something like "Frankenstein" or the bogeyman, and rarely conjures the image of a mere writer.

Rodden's account of this extraordinary development, his summaries of intellectual positions, the quotations from commercials and movies, the taxonomic zeal with which he has catalogued the three attitudes of Raymond Williams toward Orwell (favorable, mixed, and hostile, spread over a lifetime)—all this makes for a rich intellectual history, at once broad and arcane, which might suggest that loci of the momentous and volcanic moments and the splendid other terms in Rodden's theoretical apparatus offer a good model for the writing of cultural history.

But is it true that a book (or a body of work) never is a masterpiece, that it only becomes one? The maxim can be tested elsewhere. Is it true, to take an American example, that a book like *Uncle Tom's Cabin* rose to prominence chiefly because of institutional factors operating through loci of the momentous, and not through its own force? The parallels between Harriet Beecher Stowe's career and Orwell's are not to be missed. (They were noticed as early as 1946, Rodden tells us, by an official at the Book-of-the-Month Club.) Stowe's literature of social protest played a role in the Civil War just as Orwell's work did in the cold war, then so expanded its influence that more than 400 "Tom" companies toured all parts of the United States (except the South) by the 1880s, performing stage versions of the novel.

And just as with Orwell, the message of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* sank so deep into the popular imagination that the author's meaning gradually turned into an Orwellian "blackwhite," and the abolitionist novel became, on many a rustic American stage, a racist minstrel show, and the character of Uncle Tom, a selfless defender of his fellow slaves in the novel, entered the language connoting virtually the opposite. An energetic scholar could write an interesting book by training Rodden's apparatus on the Stowe phenomenon and ferreting out long-forgotten Congregationalist magazines or Broadway plays, where popular conceptions and misconceptions about Stowe must have had their start.

And yet, if you actually read *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, which not many people do nowadays, another possibility comes to mind. Stowe herself, not just her champions and popularizers, seems to have accomplished something. She seems to have drawn, from a personal commitment to a humanized Calvinism, a moral sense that was full of lofty grandeur and at the same time full of lowly common decency; and she succeeded in aiming this high-and-low Calvinist morality at an oppressive system that had always seemed, for the majority of white Ameri-

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cans, too complicated to understand; and with a grand cannonade of loathing and indignation, she made that complicated system instantly appear as what it was: simple, and evil.

The heart pounds when you read Stowe; the brain throws off electric bolts of sudden understanding. Her book, in its peculiar way, didn't become a masterpiece, it *was* one. The commentators in Christian magazines, the minstrel shows, the volcanic moment of President Lincoln's handshake: these several loci of the day, crucial though they doubtless were in dispersing and diluting her message, merely managed, after all, to respond to the grand moral and intellectual force that Stowe had already put into motion. To talk about her success without discussing the question of slavery is to talk nonsense.

Mightn't it make sense to see Orwell's success in a similar light? He, too, managed to draw, from a personal commitment to a humanized socialism, a moral sense that was full of lofty grandeur while at the same time full of lowly common decency; and he succeeded in aiming this high-and-low socialist morality at an oppressive system that had always seemed, for honest liberals, too complicated to understand; and with a grand cannonade of loathing and indignation, he made that complicated system instantly appear as what it was. And unquestionably, when you read Orwell, the heart does pound (if not quite so melodramatically as with Stowe), the brain throws off electric bolts of sudden understanding.

Surely that has something to do with the Orwell phenomenon. The man's plainness of prose, his virtuousness, his "saintliness," his view of popular culture, his exemplary courage, and all the other attributes that critics have chosen to celebrate—these have something to do with his success, undoubtedly. But surely the main reason that even today Orwell is marching Sherman-like from bookstore to bookstore through the newly liberated provinces of the East is because he, more perhaps than any other writer, with his vast moral and intellectual force, makes us understand what those provinces have had to endure.

It is often said that postmodern academic fashion—the emphasizing of factors like class, race, and gender over considerations of artistic or intellectual worth—intrudes coarse political ideology into delicate artistic zones where ideology shouldn't go. But Rodden's book shows that the opposite is more nearly true: postmodern analysis empties art and intellect of content, including political content. For in demonstrating how institutional factors transformed Orwell into a popular byword, Rodden has managed to write a 400-page book that never seriously considers the principal content of Orwell's writing. Absent from Rodden's diligent book is the reason why we respond to Orwell so forcefully, which is his political insight.

By proceeding in that manner, by looking mostly at the institutional power of book reviewers and publishing houses and other agencies, Rodden can ultimately explain very little about his main topic, which is the way that literary reputations arise. For if the Orwell phenomenon was generated by institutional factors more than by Orwell himself and what he wrote, we're bound to wonder what generated the institutional factors. What, for instance, made Trilling's high opinion of Orwell so important? Rodden suggests that Trilling saw in Orwell a way of promoting qualities that the critic liked to claim for himself, which is a comment that no doubt can help us understand how Trilling managed to write so affectingly about Orwell. But if identification with Orwell was Trilling's main motive, if his portrait was mostly a flattering mirror, if Trilling was in some respect merely advancing himself and didn't also succeed in saying something that was inherently and recognizably true, not just for himself but for others, if he didn't shed light on the age, why has anyone bothered to take Trilling's judgment seriously?

Perhaps Trilling's influence derived merely from his own institutional prominence, from the play of his byline at *Partisan Review*. Then why did anyone bother with *Partisan Review*? Because still other commentators said that *Partisan Review* was all the rage? The entire theoretical model of how ideas arise and spread eventually collapses, because the system drains the importance from ideas and leaves us with mere power relations.

Rodden is a good-souled historian and a learned one, a man of solid judgment from detail to detail, who doesn't wish to be a fanatic of his own method. He promises not to fall into the trap of saying that everything is an institutional structure—but that is what he ends up saying. His system rules his research. It's a pity. And watching such a talented writer totter with his ton of engrossing information into his own trap, I became convinced that one day soon the empire of contemporary cultural theory will crack open, and the contented university masses will turn out to be discontented after all, and though the leaders will promise reforms, their assurances will come too late, and angry crowds will throng the quadrangles chanting for old-fashioned humanist criticism, and the postmodern age will be over, and even John Rodden may feel liberated. For what good is an analytic method that prompts a highly intelligent scholar to write hundreds of fascinating pages on Orwell without casting a single beam of light on the grand idea that he gave us, perhaps deeper and shrewder than any other writer's, about the greatest theme of modern history, which is the question of totalitarianism?

PAUL BERMAN is lecturing at the University of California, Irvine, this spring.

CORRESPONDENCE *continued from page 4*

sophobia that Walter Laqueur ("From Russia with Hate") and Liah Greenfeld ("The Closing of the Russian Mind") dismiss so cavalierly. Your depiction of the three estates of pre-Soviet Russian society—nobility, peasantry, and church—as sinister, long-clawed bears perpetuates a malicious ethnic stereotype and intimates that the "New Right" Russians are somehow subhuman. The inclusion in this evil troika of a Russian Orthodox bishop clad in sacred vestments is a particularly egregious offense. Such religious bigotry is unworthy of THE NEW REPUBLIC and is reminiscent of the puerile anti-religious posters that proliferated during the Lenin and Stalin regimes. Today this kind of crude propaganda is standard fare only in Albania.

Consider the reaction if a conservative publication had printed a cover depicting the imaginary threat posed by Russia's historic left as symbolized by a student revolutionary, a radical proletarian, and a caricatured Hasid—all of whom were similarly demonized. That is precisely the level to which TNR has sunk.

REV. FR. ALEXANDER F. C. WEBSTER
Washington, D.C.

The editors welcome correspondence from readers. Letters should include the writer's full name, address, and telephone number; be typed double-spaced; and be held to under 200 words. Letters may be edited for space. Please address letters to: Correspondence, TNR, 1220 19th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

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LONDON DIARIST

Le vice américain

LE VICE ANGLAIS WAS WHAT THE French used to call my countrymen's predilection for pederasty. For years past I have known what the *vice américain* was: Anglophilia. Maybe it is less of a vice than an affliction, a morbid contagion that strikes without warning, sparing neither young nor old. Pretentious WASP, simple Midwesterner, New York Jew—all are vulnerable. I have seen them all suffer, and pitied them all alike. To judge by TNR's January 1 issue, there is a new epidemic sweeping the Eastern seaboard. An enterprising cable network has been relaying the live broadcasts from the House of Commons. Both Michael Kinsley and Henry Fairlie described the proceedings in rapturous terms. Kinsley has been a full-blown Anglophilia sufferer since he won his Rhodes scholarship. As for Fairlie, it is the better part of a quarter century since he quit our shores. He left London a poorer place and is still much missed, but when he returns he will be surprised at the change. Reading them both I wondered if we were all talking about the same place and people. Could this be the same gang of talentless, greedy, corrupt, ambitious nonentities who meet down by the riverside at the Place of Westminster and tell me how to run my life?

BOTH WRITERS ARE AWESTRUCK by the House of Commons, and not simply its antique quaintness, though that is seductive enough in its way. Again and again both compare Parliament favorably with Congress, as American writers have done before, notably and eloquently Mary McCarthy. Now, although the House of Commons is still good theater, and certainly more entertaining than either House of Congress, it is too easy to suppose that dramatic entertainment means better government. Take Question Time, when ministers and the prime minister herself are grilled. Question Time is superior to congressional committee hearings as well as to the presidential press conference, Kinsley asserts. Fairlie goes further: "Certainly a great deal more information is extracted from ministers and even the prime minister than by journalists at presidential news conferences." Is it? Of course, it is good in itself that politicians should be publicly humiliated as often as possible (though ten years of it hasn't noticeably humbled Mrs. Thatcher). But what does Question Time actually achieve? I have never known of an answer to a parliamentary question that did not on examination prove to be evasion or distortion or *suppressio veri* or *suggestio falsi* or plain lie. Question Time may be superior to the presidential press conference, but I am not sure that it is superior to testimony before congressional committees, which sometimes elicits truthful and important information. It is significant that for the past twenty-five years thoughtful parliamentarians as different as Richard Crossman (now dead) and Norman St. John Stevas (now wafted aloft as Lord St. John of Fawsley) have tried to introduce committee systems based on the American mode, a silent admission of the futility of Question Time.

ONCE FAIRLIE HAS GOT OVER THE culture shock of being electronically returned to Westminster, I expect he will notice the sharp decline in the standard of the Commons in the past thirty years, a deterioration, essentially, in the quality of MPs. This is marked enough on the Labour benches, worse on the Tory side, where more and more backbenchers supplement their income (if the word "corrupt" seems too strong) by taking "consultancy" fees from outside interests. Incidentally, Fairlie makes one or two errors. To say that the present Speaker of the Commons, Bernard Weatherill, "seems to be a match for his greatest predecessors" is a matter of opinion, but I can say only that it is an opinion shared by no one in the parliamentary press gallery, where Weatherill is regarded as a notably ineffectual Speaker. And the orotund Member of Eastbourne is still Mr. Gow, though I dare say he wouldn't mind being "Sir Ian." More serious is to say that the leaders of the parties in the Commons "are emphatically the choices of the parliamentary parties, not the membership outside." That was not true of the Tories until Edward Heath was chosen leader in 1965. It was once true of Labour, but hasn't been since the party rashly changed its constitution ten years ago. Kinnock was elected leader by an "electoral college" (more like an electoral kindergarten, we said at the time) representing in equal proportions the parliamentary Labour Party, the constituency members, and the trade unions. A leader as inadequate as Kinnock would not have been chosen under the old system, and the change marks a further decline in Parliament as an institution.

CONCLUDING HIS LOVE LETTER home, Fairlie makes several comparisons. Two are unquestionably in England's favor: the 215 bills considered by the Commons during a session against the Representatives' 1,745 (though the nature of the bills in question distorts the comparison), and the average of eighteen people on a representative's staff, against an MP's 1.6. The 1,978 hours in 218 days that the Commons sat against the House's 749 in 149 would also have to be counted on Westminster's side if legislation were an industrial process, but it isn't. The Commons now sit far longer than they used to, which is to say far too long. Another comparison is continually quoted by MPs themselves: the fact that representatives are paid almost three times as much as their British colleagues. Again, if we were talking about productive industry, that might mean something. Which is the best-governed country in Europe, or maybe in the world? Switzerland. And what are members of the Swiss parliament paid? Nothing. The last country left with something like an Athenian democracy treats politics as an amateur sport. Naturally as a result less time is spent in Berne passing otiose laws and making mischief, but then that is rather the point.

THE LAST COMPARISON LOOKS A clincher for the Anglophiles. More than three-quarters of the electorate turns out at a British general election, and, as Fairlie says, barely half the American electorate votes (at presidential elections, that is; he might have added that it is little more than a third of the electorate at midterm congressional elections). I too used to think that was an alarming figure. In 1959-60 John Bowles, president of Rexall Drugstores, started a campaign to persuade more Americans to vote. He had been depressed on a visit to Soviet Russia when a girl asked him why it was America that was the democracy when ninety-eight percent of Russians voted at every election. But as Dwight MacDonald pointed out, the turnout in Soviet elections was a symptom of totalitarianism, not of democracy. It will seem perverse to Fairlie and Kinsley, but the turnout at elections may just be a score on the American side. This scorn for politics and politicians is a tribute to the sense of the American people whose deepest and finest tradition is one of lawlessness, disrespect for the state, and anti-political individualism. So at least it seems to someone who has to endure, and financially support, the antics of the House of Commons, wigs, Black Rod, pointless laws, and all. But then, paying for the wretches is a wonderful practical cure for Anglophilia.

GEOFFREY WHEATCROFT

Geoffrey Wheatcroft is a columnist for the *Sunday Telegraph*.

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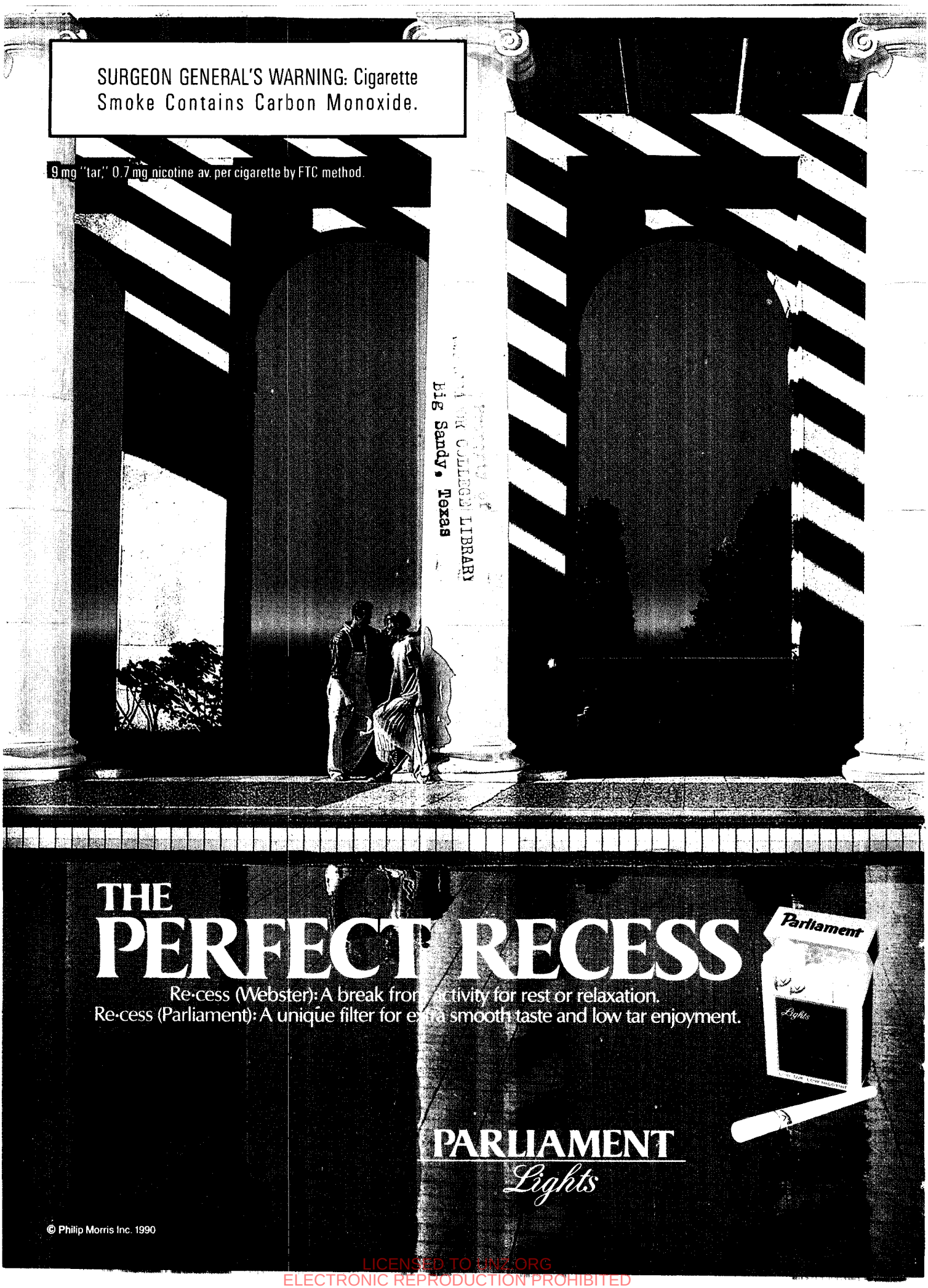
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